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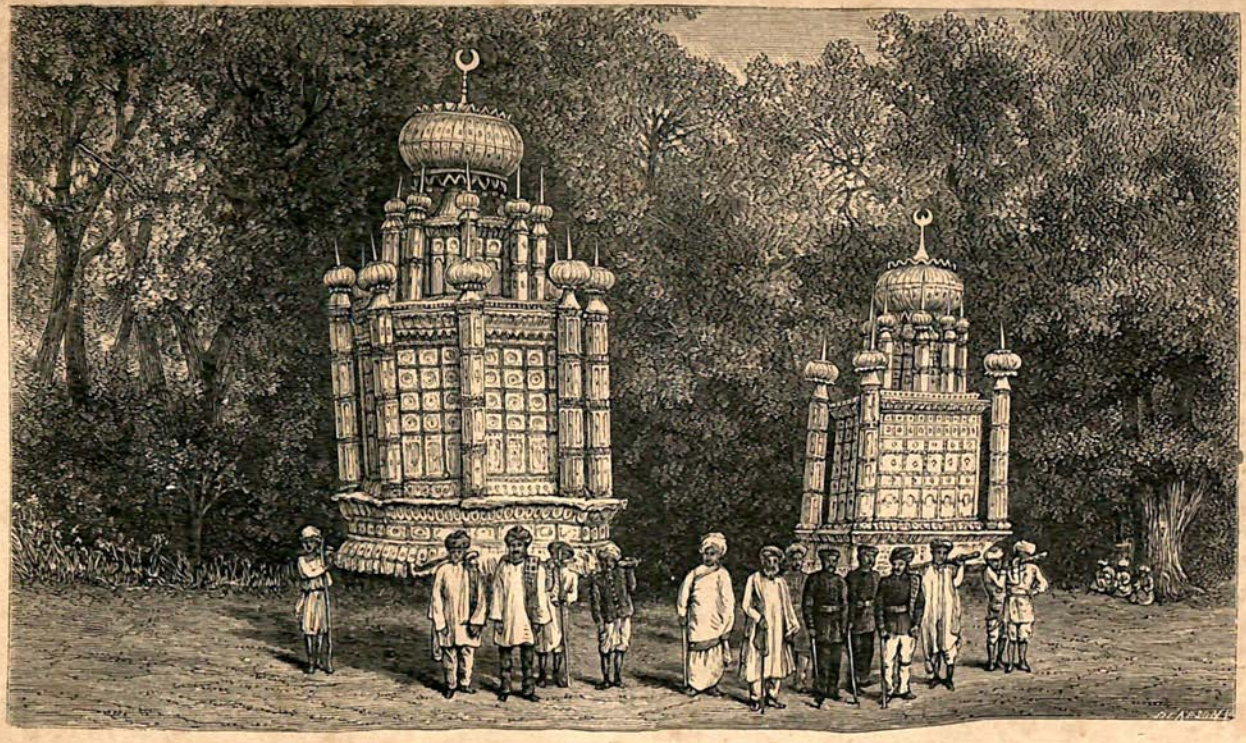
MY YEAR IN AN INDIAN FORT.

VOL. II.



THE TABOOTS.

MY YEAR
IN
AN INDIAN FORT.

By MRS. GUTHRIE,
AUTHOR OF "THROUGH RUSSIA."

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MY YEAR IN AN INDIAN FORT.

CHAPTER I.

Invitation to Witness a Native Play—The Theatre—The Audience—The Head-Master of the Belgaum School—The Drama of "Shakuntala"—History and Plot of the Play—Behind the Scenes—Hindoos and Arabs—Refreshments—Music and Musical Instruments—Specimen of the Modern Drama—A German Lady's Opinion of Indian Music—Hindoo Gamut and Notation—Brain of the Hindoo.

I WAS much pleased at receiving an invitation from some friends to accompany them to see a Hindoo play, which I had a great desire to witness; and I could not have gone under happier auspices. These performances do not take place until very late, and it was eleven o'clock before we started. The night was intensely dark, and I have no idea in what part

of the town we were set down. A private house had been arranged for the occasion, apparently of limited dimensions, but I was astonished to see the extensive premises that were concealed by the mud face of the edifice. We alighted amidst a considerable crowd of people, who were hanging about, hoping to obtain admission, although the theatre was declared to be already full.

The mode of entrance was not easy. We had to scramble over a very high wicket, and through a space so small that it was fortunate we were all of the lean kind. This difficulty overcome, we had to cross a large and very uneven yard, in which we were desired to pick our way carefully, as there were cattle about. The scene of action was neither more nor less than another long yard, round which there were open wooden galleries, the centre being covered in for the occasion by a sheet of painted canvas.

On entering, we were received by a Hindoo gentleman, an M.A. of the Bombay University, and head-master of the Belgaum school. He had a tranquil manner, large, luminous eyes, and a gentle voice. He sat by us during the entertainment, ready to explain all that was strange and interesting. The theatre was bril-

liantly lighted, and the appearance of the audience most respectable. There was not a turban nor a garment that was not of spotless white. Some of the audience were distributed upon benches, others sat in their ordinary monkey-fashion, and every man was armed with a stout stick. One of the galleries, occupied by a huddled mass of women and children, who either stood and looked over the wooden balcony, or obtained a bird's-eye view from between the supporting bars, was full to overflowing. Instead of being decked out for the occasion, their ordinary ornaments were concealed by dark drapery, and, very different from that of the men, their general appearance was dingy and squalid. The children presented a somewhat gayer picture. A very pretty little pair of brown legs, with silver anklets, dangled over my head great part of the evening.

It was a pity that we were too late to see the opening ceremony—an address to the Deity, with which all plays commence. The drama was "Shakuntala, or, the Lost Ring," by Kalidas.* The scene opens with King Dushyanta's

* The history of this play is most interesting. In the last century, before our era, there lived a Hindoo king, named Vieramaditza, who was a great patron of learning. His eight poets, with himself, are known in Hindoo litera-

hunting excursion in the forest, when he beholds the beautiful Shakuntala, the daughter of Kanwa, the sage, and he prevails on the damsel to become his wife by a Gondaharva marriage (a private marriage), and gives her his ring as the pledge of his troth. Then Dushyanta returns to his own city, whilst Shakuntala remains in the hermitage of her father. After this, Durvasa, a sage, visits the hermitage of Kanwa, but the thoughts of Shakuntala, being fixed upon her husband, she hears not the approach of the sage, and Durvasa curses the damsel, vowing that she shall be forgotten by the man she loves. After a while, however, he relents, and promises that the curse shall be removed as soon as Dushyanta sees the ring.

When Shakuntala finds that she is likely to become a mother, she sets off for the palace of

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ture as the "nine gems." The most distinguished of them all was Kalidas, who is said to have raised the Indian drama to the highest pitch of perfection, and "Shakuntala," or, "Sacantala," is considered his masterpiece. It need scarcely be observed how curious are these ancient dramas as illustrating the national, social, and religious characteristics of the Hindoo race as they existed two thousand years ago. The play of "Shakuntala" has been translated both into English and German, and was greatly admired by Goethe.

her husband; but on her way she bathes in a sacred pool, and the ring drops from her finger, and is lost beneath the waters. When she reaches the palace of the King, his memory departs from him, and he does not own her to be his wife. Her mother comes and carries her away to the jungle, and there she gives birth to a son, who is named Bharata. Here it so happens that a large fish is caught by a fisherman; the ring of Dushyanta is found in the belly of the fish, and is carried to the King. Dushyanta sees the ring, and remembers the beautiful Shakuntala, who had become his wife by the Gondaharva marriage. Upon this the King goes into the jungle, and sees the boy Bharata sporting with young lions, and setting at naught the lioness that gives them suck. His heart burns towards the lad, and presently he beholds the sorrowing Shakuntala, and recognises her as his wife, and Bharata as his son. So he takes Shakuntala and Bharata to pay their respectful visits to Kashyapa, when the sage pronounces a benediction upon them, and the curtain falls.

When we entered, a handsome young man, gorgeously attired in the tight-fitting scarlet and gold costume of an Eastern king, was uttering a soliloquy in front of a white curtain.

In a short time he was joined by a Brahman, with snow-white locks and flowing beard, who wore a white robe, over which was cast a scarlet mantle with a square-cut cape, while on his head was a cap of the same colour (the costume greatly resembled the state robes of a cardinal). His right hand was curiously slipped half way up a narrow red cloth bag, in the shape of the letter L. This was the gowmukhi, or cow's mouth, used to prevent the hand touching the sacred vessels from coming in contact with anything less holy.* Our M.A. told us that it was still worn upon certain religious occasions by the Brahmans, but not now in every-day life, as represented in the drama.

The curtain drawing up, a pretty scene was disclosed. The hermit's daughter, and her two companions, were flitting about in a garden gathering flowers, in the midst of which arose a tall jet of water, which fell back into a basin. There were numerous arches twined about with creeping plants, and arcades of shady banana-

* * In an engraving which I have seen of a female performing the ceremony of Linga Puji, she is represented with the gowmukhi upon her right hand. The Gowmukhi, or Cow's Mouth, a spot much resorted to by pilgrims, is a name given to a rocky passage through which the sacred Ganges passes not far from its source.

trees, all the foliage real. The young attendants were rather pretty, but not so the heroine. All three were represented by boys, scholars from the school. The back of the stage was open, and there the people who managed the theatre stood, when at leisure, and enjoyed the play. Hindoos, I was told, have most retentive memories, and can speak for hours without tripping, but their delivery is exceedingly monotonous, and they use very little action.

In another act—I think there were as many as seven—the hermit is seen reading in a cave, by the light of the sacrificial fire which burns in the centre.

"Listen," said my friend, as the hermit pronounced some sentences from his book, "those are Sanskrit verses of unknown age."

"From the Veda, I suppose," I said.

"Yes," was the reply; "these words may have been uttered thousands of years ago in the cradle of our race."

Some of the scenes were omitted, and the conclusion was a burlesqued representation of some of the Hindoo marriage ceremonies. When the bride leaves the home of her father for that of her husband's family, rice, fruit, and sweetmeats, perhaps money and jewels, are poured into her lap as she squats upon the floor; but

on this occasion an overwhelming quantity of coarse vegetables was heaped upon the victim by three hideous old women, and the curtain fell amidst the merry but quiet laughter of the audience.

After this we changed our places, finally settling down at the side of the stage. Before so doing, however, we walked about behind the curtain, and were introduced to the Ganapati, the popular god who had figured in the invocation scene before our arrival, and to celebrate whose festival the entertainment was given. It was quite a work of art, the grotesque creature being beautifully modelled, richly coloured, and glazed with a fine clear varnish, which gave it all the effect of being made of china. The M.A. asked my friend if he would like to have it. He hesitated, and asked if it was still useful.

"Ah! no," replied the Hindoo; "we have done with our god now. The divinity has died out of him, and he is now but gilded loam and painted clay."

In our new seats we faced the audience. Many of the men were handsome, though broad, their features were well cut, their teeth and eyes magnificent, and their general cast of countenance, though quiet, thoughtful and intel-

ligent. I could not but compare their appearance with that of the Arabs, with whose type I was better acquainted. My conclusions were all in favour of the eagle eyes, sharp-cut mouths, and mobile features of the latter race. The Hindoo is a more sensual-looking creature than the Arab.

I must not forget to mention the refreshments with which we were regaled, the natives using all sorts of stimulating spices, which are said to be very wholesome. Cardamum seeds, which to me are very distasteful, were in great request among them; but I managed to look pleasant over them, which was so encouraging to our M.A. friend that he drew from the folds of his girdle several little triangular packets, one of which he requested me to eat. It contained powdered betel-nut, neatly packed up in a nym leaf, which was thickly daubed with lime, a process by which the flavour is supposed to be brought out. The first set were a little faded, in consequence of the warm position they had occupied, but some fresh ones were procured, and they looked so pretty and green that at least we could declare ourselves satisfied with their appearance.

The next amusement was the entrance of a buffoon in a kind of loose white and red carnival

dress. Of course his jokes were lost upon us, but they appeared to amuse the people. A band of musicians then came upon the stage, one man playing upon the cylindrical drum of the country, just such an instrument as is represented upon the Jaina temples. It was astonishing what a variety of tones he produced by merely striking the parchment with the ball of his thumb. The notes of a kind of banjo were not unpleasing. Still more agreeable were the sounds produced from the lute, a fretted instrument of divine origin; in fact, a guitar of prodigious length, this one—for they differ much—having seven strings, and at each side of the sounding-board a large gourd. The brass cymbals struck in occasionally, and the leader not only played upon a clarionet, but conducted a kind of impromptu dialogue, in which both musicians and actors took part.

The evening concluded with a mythological drama. The play had been an unusual effort, but this piece was even more interesting, as it was a specimen of the everyday amusements of the natives. I fancied that I could see in this representation the germ of those passion plays of the Middle Ages, the revival of which has caused offence to many people.

Two chairs, placed upon the stage, did duty

for thrones. Indra, as king of Heaven, an imposing figure in a tight red dress covered over with golden eyes, took possession of one of them; a Brahman, with the scarlet robes and cow's mouth, which we had previously seen, sat down in the other. The sun and the moon then entered, and squatted one on the side of Indra and the other on that of the priest. The group was completed by the arrival of Shiva, a gigantic man, an awe-inspiring figure in cloth of gold. There was no glitter about the costumes, and the dull colours and the dead gold looked grand without being gaudy. The animated dialogue which now took place between the gods and the musicians was interspersed with musical choruses and nasal recitations in blank verse, which I was told were delivered in Sanskrit. This still popular sort of entertainment was probably devised in order to teach as well as to amuse the people, and possibly the very sentences which fell upon our ears contained the early schooling of the Aryan race. It was nearly two o'clock when we left the theatre, and it was probable that the audience would not break up for, at least, a couple of hours.

Although the music I had heard at the play was, doubtless, second-rate, it was superior to that of the ordinary village performers. On the

following day I had an interesting conversation upon the subject with Mrs. R——, who not only had a thorough knowledge of her own German system of music, but was also conversant with that of the Hindoos. During half the year she and her husband camped out in the districts, and whenever there were good native musicians in the neighbourhood they had them brought up to their tents. She told me how quickly these people read music from the names of the notes, and how, in their songs, these names were given in place of words, a plan which an Italian maestro of the present day is anxious to adopt in opera music. It is only the uneducated man who trolls out in recitative, or what he conceives to be melody, the deeds of his peasant ancestors, or the charms of his lady-love. Mrs. R—— was of opinion that there was much to admire in their musical system, but that the practice of the art has much declined. A series of lectures, respecting the construction of Hindoo music, was lately given in Bombay, but it has not yet been printed. There is, however, a chapter upon the subject in Mr. Percival's work, which very much interested me. His views are to the following effect:

Music, like everything else in India, is invest-

ed with divine attributes. The art, say the Hindoos, was communicated to mortals by Sarasvati, the consort of Brahma. Their son Náreda, a law-giver and astronomer, invented the vina, or lute, and the first inspired man, Bherat, invented the drama. Their music includes eighty-four modes, each supposed to have a peculiar expression, capable of moving some particular sentiment or affection. The modes take their denomination from the seasons, or from the hours of night and day. Musical composition is supposed capable of adaptation to the different periods. They call the seven musical sounds comprising an octave by the common name swara, and arrange them under the following names, sarja, rishabha, gandhara, madyama, panchama, dhaivata, hishada. The first is emphatically called swara, sound, as leading in the scale. Taking the initial letters of the above words as the exponents of the successive sounds or notes, they devised a gamut, which is called swaragrama, or Seplica, and thus express it—sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni. The notation is made in five of the sounds, by varying the length of the vowel, which, as we have seen, is inherent in every consonant or letter, and by the vowels forming the initial of the names of the other two. In

this way the means of indicating notes of two different lengths are found in the gamut; other marks are used to indicate greater length. Then for the purpose of expressing the octave as above or below, the connexion and succession of notes, the process of execution, or of fingering the vina (the lute, of which there are many varieties), little circles, ellipses, crescents, chains, curves, lines—straight, horizontal, or perpendicular—are employed, and the close of a strain is distinguished by a lotus flower. The notes of the major and minor scales are subject to divisions beyond the range of semitones, and all these tones are regarded as nymphs bearing distinct names, and their variations are effected by attendant sisters. It may be remarked that the word Rág, as applied to musical modes, signifies passion, and is intended to intimate the purpose of those modes to affect the simple and combined susceptibilities of the emotions.

The Hindoos divide the year into six seasons, whose peculiar characteristics are provided for in the compositions appropriated to each. The religious festivals of the Hindoos have also a connection with the seasons, regulated, as they are, so much by astronomical phenomena; and therefore devotion contributes to heighten the charms of music. The day is also subject to

seven divisions, morning, noon, and night, with their trysandhya, intervals for the day and night. Thus the six Ragas of the seasons are linked together in family concert, each being regarded as a demi-god wedded to five Raginas or nymphs, and the father of eight little genii called sons. Was ever anything more charmingly fanciful than this Hindoo fairyland! How curiously are the spiritual and the sensual blended together in the minds of this people! To them everything in nature is converted into a symbol of the unseen. It seems as if by some curious process of inversion, they love to elevate their stocks and stones, their commonest domestic utensils, into the spiritual world, and to drag their divinities down to the earth.*

I happened to ask a friend if it was true that the brain weight of the Hindoo approached nearer to the German than to that of any other

* Mr. Moor expresses a strong opinion respecting the music of the Hindoos. "I have been more affected with delicious sensations resulting from the simple melody of a Vina or a Saranga, delicately accompanied, than I can bring myself to feel from the elaborate concord of sweet sounds elicited from an Italian orchestra. . . . With Indian music the auditor is never in the smallest degree surprised; it has nothing brilliant or wonderful; he knows not why, but he feels enraptured; his heart is filled, and his eyes are suffused."—MOOR'S *Hindoo Pantheon*, *p.* 46.

people. "It is so," was the reply; "and it is also a fact that the educated Hindoo flies to German literature. His sympathies go out at once towards it."

CHAPTER II.

Advent of the Monsoon—The Church covered with Matting—Preparations to meet the Storm—Perilous Position—Ices after the Storm—Change in the Appearance of the Country—The Deccan Peasants—Curious Night Scenes.

LONG before the breaking of the monsoon, it became the general topic of conversation. Such preparations were made for its reception as to induce me to believe that a second deluge was impending. It was reported to have broken out at such and such a place far away; it was on its march—its progress was watched like that of an enemy. Quietly, at the rate of forty miles a day, it drew nearer and nearer. Clouds obscured the distant mountains, and finally settled down upon the long fells. One day I passed our church, the western face of which was concealed under matting stretched upon a scaffolding. I had forgotten the advent of the monsoon, and could not imagine what

had befallen the little building. I was told that it was thus secured lest its chunam face should be washed away. All the fury of the rains come up from the west. In the camp, which is much more exposed than the fort, the low bungalows were basketed up, until they resembled huge packages, only waiting for the direction to be wheeled away upon gigantic waggons. The chunam gate-posts, of florid architecture, at the entrances of the various compounds, were swathed up; but the fine old Jaina pillars, the spoil of many a sacred edifice, firm in the strength which had endured for centuries, took care of themselves. How they must have despised their plaster imitations!

Within the lines the prisoners' cells were so secured that in them the unlucky soldiers must have passed their time in more than semi-obscurity. The waggons upon the roads diminished in numbers, and those still crawling along were provided with coverings made from the fibre of the palm. A hundred signs indicated a change, but all the while the sun shone, the birds sang, and the superb butterflies glinted from flower to flower. I began to think that the monsoon was a myth.

The morning of the fourth of June was unusually lovely, but towards one o'clock heavy

clouds came rolling up; it began to drizzle, and shortly the rain poured down, and it became so dark that we could not see to read. Right over our heads the thunder crashed, the lightning seemed to blaze into the rooms, the wind roared in the great trees, and to increase the din, violent hail set in. In the middle of it all out flew G——, arrayed in a costume which closely resembled that of a diver. Unlucky man! he had that very morning sown his most precious South-American fern; but all his exertions availed him not; he was beaten back, and they were washed away. The shivering Hindoos sat on their heels in odd corners; the Mahomedans drew forth their beads, and called upon the Prophet; but the braver Portuguese crossed themselves, and, heedless of the state of the elements, rushed out, and gathered up into heaps the pieces of ice, which were all of one uniform size and shape, like button mushrooms with incipient stems. We weighed a couple, which together were above an ounce. There was no resting; we wandered from room to room, with our hands before our eyes, to protect them from the fierce flashing lightning, thinking the while with anything but pleasure of our close proximity to the powder magazine.

Meanwhile, a flight of terrified bats sought

refuge in the house, and flitting about in a ghostly fashion, might have been taken by the superstitious for evil spirits let loose for the occasion. The hail ceased, but how the water did pour down! It covered the flower-beds, and brimmed over the great rose-tubs. G—— was in despair. At length the fierceness of the storm was spent, and then we sat down and revived ourselves with sherry-cobbler made of the hail. Many people kept the frozen pyramids which they had secured until next day, when they regaled themselves with ices.

Dreary was the scene when the waters began to subside. Every inch of their fall disclosed fresh damage done. Islands began to appear out of the lake, and when the waters had partially subsided, mud was disclosed where solid ground had been; the earthed-up beds were flattened, and covered with stones and all sorts of *débris*, and, worst of all, the large-leaved plants, the pride of the garden, were rent, and torn, and broken down. We picked up a pretty little green and brown bird, which had been killed by an ice bullet—a coppersmith, so called from its uttering a continuous monotonous clanging note. No lightning fell in the fort, but in the camp arsenal two soldiers were knocked down, and a stack of muskets was destroyed. That uni-

versal person, "the oldest inhabitant," had never seen such a storm, and for once he was a true oracle, for in Belgaum so great a downfall in so short a time had never been known, the Government rain-guage marking a depth of six inches and three-quarters, and that in four hours and a half.

After this storm, some days of charming weather ensued, followed by a period which was very tempestuous. Violent winds and frequent downfalls of rain, at last became continual. This state of things did not last above a week, after which we were often able to snatch an afternoon drive. When we did venture forth, the whole appearance of the country was changed. The woods had become purple, the lakes and pools which had sprung up were bright red. The overflowing tank was double its usual size, and tiny torrents roared and brawled in grips—*kullohs*, they call them here—which we had been used to pass unnoticed. The hedges of prickly pear and sharp-pointed aloe, peculiar to the country, had been cut without mercy, and were throwing out fresh leaves and luxuriant shoots with amazing rapidity. The more domestic hedges were full of flowers. The marvel of Peru, with its bright purple tube, and the lantana, or wild sage, with its many-

hued clustered blossoms, saffron and lilac and white, along with that black-eyed flower of tenderest buff, the thumberyia, and the convolvulus, magnificent in size, with its white flowers, twined in and out, and threw forth long streamers. The low grounds were flooded, the bright green rice shot up in great earthen trays, the ridges and spaces between bearing maze and sugar-cane, tobacco, and other succulent plants. The great dogs splashed in and out, making white foam upon the ruddy water. As for Bustle, we thought that he would have been drowned in his encounters with bandy-foots as big as himself; but, although with a few honourable wounds, he always came off victorious.

It was amusing to see the natives. The Deccan peasant never sleeps in the open country; be it rain, or be it sunshine, night sees him returning to his village, to retrace his steps after a few hours' repose. During the rains he shrouds himself in a long garment called a cumlie, a long narrow blanket joined at the top and down the back; but if the weather is warm, he adopts another mode of shelter. He suspends upon his head a long, oval, concave basket, which descends to the calf of his leg. The frame is made of the lightest bamboo, and when well wattled with

teak, or other leaves, it is quite impervious to the weather. It has a little peak near the top, and bears a great resemblance to a limpet shell. A troop of men walking along, each with his temporary home upon his back, nothing of him to be seen but two sticks of legs below the knee joint, present a most absurd appearance. They might be perambulating birds, beasts, or shell-fish. It would puzzle an Owen to class them. The inmate of such an abode is completely sheltered, if he chooses to squat down and turn his back to the driving storm. No snail is more comfortably protected in his moveable dwelling.

At this season the fig tribe, the palms, and most of the acacias, lost their beauty. The mango still retained its bright, glossy leaves, and nothing could be more beautiful than the feathery foliage of the giant tamarind and the clumps of trembling bamboo. Rich succulent jungle creepers, and delicate orchids, clothed many a gnarled stem. We no longer saw the camp fires blaze. The Dharam Sálás were silent and deserted. The greatest change of all had taken place upon the swelling downs; no longer brown, they waved with heavy crops of grass. Immense herds of cattle came filing over the moors, and shepherds pastured their black

flocks. They would throw a sick sheep over their shoulders in a manner which always reminded me of the good shepherd of the catacombs—that noble but simple fresco. Vapours rested upon the low hills; no glowing sunset lit up the scene, but the evening sky possessed a peculiar loveliness. The clouds lay in layers of soft pink and dove colour. Sometimes they would part, and disclose the clear green sky—a sure sign of rain upon the morrow. The air was soft, and we often lingered until clouds came hurrying over the dim moon and obscured the stars. It made one think of the late September evenings at home and roused half melancholy feelings, increased by the wailing minor music which came floating over the downs, long descended melodies which the peasant pipes upon his reed.

Occasionally we stopped to capture great glow-worms, lumps of light of singular size and brilliancy, but we never could induce them to stay in our garden, where they would shine only for a night or two and then disappear. The fire-flies were also of unusual size, but they were few and far between, giving forth a light very unlike that of the smaller insects of other climes, which I have seen sparkle until they made the dead night scintillate like a scene of

fairyland. Although we no longer saw the flames which cooked the travellers' supper, mysterious lights danced about in all directions, for every belated Hindoo provides himself with a torch to guide him on his way, to scare away the evil creatures pictured as headless, which he imagines to be lurking by his path, ready first to fascinate, and then to strangle him. More reasonably it is carried to prevent him from treading upon the snakes, which are rife during the rainy season. Sometimes an ardent mass of fire would cast a lurid glow upon the solemn moors, where some poor pagan's body was being resolved into its original elements.

CHAPTER III.

Hindoo Mythology—Brahma—Vishnu—Hindoo Worship—Festival of the Holi—The Swinging Festival—Self-Tortures—The Legend of Rama—Election of the Monkey God—Festival of Indra—Rejoicings in May—Diving for Nuts—People at the August Festivals—Procession of Maidens—Festival of Krishna—Holidays in Honour of Ganaputa—Worship of Amanta.

THE religion of the Hindoos is so intimately bound up with the life of the people, so much a part of their daily habits, that I was anxious to learn a little respecting their mythology, especially as I hoped to see something of their principal festivals. A stumbling-block, however, arose at the very beginning,

"Gods met with gods, and jostled in the dark."

How was I to make myself acquainted with a pantheon which numbered no less than three hundred and thirty millions? No wonder that they are numerous, for the Hindoos pray to separate gods for separate purposes. They

have even a divinity whose special province it is to cure the itch. My mind, however, was relieved when I found that all these spiritual personages could be resolved into two or three. Brahma, as creator, stands alone; but so little inclination have the Hindoos for a single object of worship, that there is now standing but one temple in all India dedicated to him.

Vishnu and Shiva had wives, and it is their progeny, their avatars, who appear and re-appear in such a multitudinous and mysterious manner, and furnish the two great streams of deities who, partaking of the special attributes of their progenitors, people the mythological world. The wives of the gods rank high in the spiritual scale, being the active powers of their lords. No Hindoo looks forward to meeting with the reality of his idols when his soul, having passed through various births (the last being of necessity that of a Brahman), takes its place in the divine essence.

When I have seen these people bowing down before their idols and making their offerings, how I have longed to know what was passing in their minds—whether, they were indeed worshipping the very stone before them, or were paying their homage to the earthly symbol of

an unseen spirit. Part of the ceremony of puga, or worship, consists of taking a flower, which the devotee places in his left hand, and putting his right hand upon it (if he does as his shastras direct him to do), he reflects in his mind on the form of the god he is worshipping. He then lays the flower on his head, and joining his hands together, closes his eyes, thinks again upon the form of his god, that he has a nose, eyes, four arms, four hands, &c.; and finally recites the outer forms of worship in his mind. There is, I believe, no doubt that the educated Hindoos, whilst they bow down before their idols, qualify their worship with some sort of mental reservation.

Soon after my arrival in Belgaum, occurred the feast of the Holi, which takes place at the full of the moon, as near to the end of February, or the beginning of March, as may be. It is held in honour of the most popular of the gods, Krishna, and celebrates the day on which he descended from the skies in order to swing and dance with the milkmaids. He is a kind of personification of Spring, which season this festival was originally meant to celebrate. It is a period of extreme licence, a perfect saturnalia, a queer combination of carnival and April Fool's Day, when people exercise their wit by sending their friends upon bootless errands, and

pelt one another with a deep-red powder called gulal, composed of rice or barley meal, and dyed with the juice of saffron wood. At this time they indulge in the mischievous habit of erecting in the middle of the roads small ovens, built of loose stones, on which they bake wheaten cakes, and never clear these obstacles away unless forced to do so by the native police. Loud music is heard all day and night, and for long afterwards the clothes of the people are stained with gulal. In rich communities, the characteristic mode of celebrating the day is to play the Hóli on horseback, when the riders pelt one another with balls of the red powder, enclosed in thin plates of talk, which burst when struck. At this time the buffaloes, who come in numbers to the tank to be watered, have their foreheads and horns dyed red, and the inoffensive beasts in consequence look most ferocious.

Shortly after the Hóli the swinging festival takes place, that amusement being continued during many days. Our men would steal away and be discovered hard at work beneath a mango-tree. Swings were erected in the groves, and children exercised themselves under the mud verandahs. In the houses young men and women were to be seen disporting themselves, standing up together in couples and balancing

themselves with much grace. The tall elastic forms of the latter were displayed to advantage. Their pretty round arms, raised above their heads, glittered with silver and glass bracelets; no iron ring, the stern emblem of female married life, was there, for maidens alone indulge in the amusement. The sport was managed with considerable skill, for as many as three swings would be going at the same time in a small room, and had not perfect time been kept a collision would have been inevitable. "Ah," remarked a friend with whom I was driving, "years ago this sport was differently carried on. At that time of day it was not unusual to see a man suspended by means of a hook thrust through the muscles of his back, swaying to and fro in silent agony, and death frequently ensued." This was by no means one of the most terrible of the tortures to which the votaries of Shiva subjected themselves, ere such practices were sternly put down by Government. "I have seen," says Ward, "one man, whose singular mode of self-torture struck me much; his breast, arms, and other parts of his body were entirely covered with pins, as thick as nails, or packing-needles."*

* In that strange book, "The Doctor," Southey remarks that religions which impose privations and self-torture have

The 9th of April is specially dedicated to Rama, the seventh incarnation of Vishnu, who became incarnate in order to subdue Rawan, the ten-headed monster of Ceylon. This feat he achieved by the assistance of Hanuman, the chief of the monkey tribe.* The legend is full of interest, as it affords a glimpse into the pre-historic times. In the dim obscurity we can trace the warlike deeds of the Indian monarch, who, thousands of years ago, swept through the Deccan and on to the Malabar jungles, the aboriginal inhabitants of which he obliged to join him in his descent upon the island of Ceylon.

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always been popular, and that it is more easy to persuade a man to flay himself, or to swing from a hook, than to conform to the plain rules of morality and common sense.

* Hanuman afterwards became a member of the Hindoo Pantheon, but did not attain this enviable position without a struggle. The story of his election is such an illustration of the coarse humour pervading the Hindoo character that I cannot resist giving it, and, be it observed, there are very few Hindoo tales that look well upon paper. The superior gods, with Indra at their head, were very unwilling that divine honours should be paid to the jungle warrior. A few of their body, however, insisted upon nominating him, and a solemn council was called. Hanuman's supporters being in the minority had recourse to stratagem, and contrived to administer something to their opponents which gave them severe cholic. Indra was obliged to go home at once, many others followed, and the election of the monkey-god, by his cunning friends, took place.

The feast of Rama continues for several days, and returning from our evening drives we saw the temples, erected in his honour, brilliantly illuminated. The worship of Rama is always preceded by a few ceremonies in honour of Hanuman, and their images are generally set up together. Stone figures of the monkey-god are kept in the houses of his disciples, and the worshipper of this animal is promised every gratification he can desire, including long life, which this god can bestow, as he is immortal. The more enlightened Hindoos are ashamed of this worship. A quarrel is related between two Brahmans, one of whom was paid by a rich man to repeat the ceremonies of Hindoo worship before the image of Hanuman daily, at his house. In the midst of the quarrel the other said, "Thou refuse of Brahmans, thou gainest a subsistence by worshipping a monkey."*

The festival held in honour of the Hindoo

* "Brahma, the great spirit, comes neither within the thoughts nor the speech of men." In the Rigveda there is a discourse upon this subject. A pupil inquires of a sage respecting Brahma. The sage answers him by an impressive silence. Upon being called upon for the reason of this silence, he answers, Brahma is indescribable. He who says "I know Brahma," knows him not; he who says "I know him not, has obtained this knowledge." He is the unknown god.—WARD'S "View"—*Introduction.*

new year takes place at the new moon, as near as possible to the 2nd of March. On this occasion the great amusement is the flying of kites, and from the gravity with which not only children, but old men, enter into the sport, it is probable that some superstitious idea is attached to a successful flight. I afterwards heard that the anxiety displayed arose from the heavy bets laid upon the success of these kites.

The town was full of shambling processions of men and boys bearing aloft banners and coloured flags in honour of Indra (King of Heaven). This is a great day with the astrologers, who utter predictions, favourable or otherwise, according to the value of the presents which they receive. At night worship is paid to the almanack. Near this time another celebrated commemoration took place, but I did not hear the name of the god in whose honour it was held. Hearing loud shouts, and the thump of the tom-toms, I mounted the battlements, and saw numbers of people assembled upon the plain beneath. They were amusing themselves by racing triumphal chariots, which were adorned with evergreens and flags, and crowded with men in grotesque costumes, who made a prodigious noise. Teams of bullocks were attached to these cars, and tall men, all but

naked, stood up, lashing them on with powerful whips. They looked like enraged demons—alas! for the poor beasts!

The merry month of May is set aside for rejoicings and for bridal festivities. Bridegrooms were to be seen squatting under mud verandahs, and receiving their friends; queerly draped figures they were, wreathed with lovely garlands of pink and white flowers, their faces covered with gilding and red paint. We saw nothing of the brides. The bagpipe-like squeak of a kind of clarionet, and the boom of the drum, issued from many a house; bands of musicians came marching past, and in the courtyards we saw crowds of people gathered round men who were elevated on platforms. They were half speaking, half reciting; sometimes the audience laughed, and sometimes the upturned faces assumed an expression of grave attention. No doubt many a curious mythological story was told—many a warlike deed done by the forefathers of the listeners was recounted. Mr. Grant Duff, in his history of the Máhrattas, notices these assemblies, which he calls "Kuthas." He says:—

"Divested of the religious character of which they partake, Kuthas more nearly resemble Mr. Mathews's entertainments of the present day

than anything to which I can compare them in England. Some of the recitations, however, are very ancient, being taken from the Puranas, and are to the Hindoos what their ancient lays were to the Latins."

During the months of June and July several festivals took place, of which I saw nothing. At the end of the latter month certain demi-gods, in the form of serpents, are worshipped, and ceremonies are performed, in order to ensure protection against the bites of snakes, while prayers are addressed to the serpent Kali, said to have been slain by Krishna.

A great holiday is observed in the beginning of the month of August, upon which occasion all the Government offices are closed. The fury of the monsoon is supposed to be spent, and it is a period of rejoicing all along the western coast of India. Ships once more spread their sails, and trading steamers, which have not dared to brave the furious storms of the previous months, begin to run. The dull ports are opened, and the people who have slept for weeks away wake up to active life, and with turbulent rejoicings, troop down to the shore, and throw cocoa-nuts into the sea, in order to propitiate the spirits that rule the waves. The festival is equally observed inland, where

with some of the most valuable crops it is a critical time, and the rural population bear their offerings to the tanks. I was particularly desirous of witnessing this ceremony; and hearing, through the Hindoo servants, that it would take place about four o'clock, at that hour I stole forth.

A great number of people were assembled upon the high parapetted embankment, which curves along the southern shore of the lake. At first, being alone, I was not altogether comfortable, but I kept upon the outskirts of the crowd. The men and boys (there were no women present) occasionally looked at me with mild surprise; but the natives regard an Englishwoman with the enforced respect which has become a habit, and they quietly stepped aside to let me pass. As I watched the ever-shifting scene, I saw much that was strange and interesting. The people were busy throwing their provision of nuts into the tank, and young men, evidently of low caste—they were as black as negroes—were diving for them. Several swimming matches excited the attention of the public; the performers were, no doubt, partially clad, for no Hindoo enters the water altogether uncovered. I could perceive that many of the throng did not belong to Belgaum. Their com-

plexions were a lighter brown; they had oval faces and well-shaped features, and many of them wore beautiful clusters of large pearls in their ears, and had outer jackets of rich silk.

Among the elderly men some were of dignified appearance, and carried gold-headed sticks, nearly as tall as themselves. Many of these were works of art, being beautifully painted in bright colours, vermilion predominating; they also appeared to be enamelled. These people were from the neighbouring town of Shárpur, a primitive place, which belongs to a native chief. There were Ryots—or peasants—from distant villages, dressed in holiday suits of gaudy cotton, and wild-looking beings, with bullet-heads and lowering brows, from the jungles. I took up my post of observation under a tree on the top of a mound, close to which two roads met, a spot which could not be invaded by the herds of buffaloes which wended their way down to the water, anxious to drink prosperity to the growing grass. A few Parsees were loitering about, distinguished wherever they threaded their way by the vivid hues of their green and cherry-coloured satin veils. Close to where I stood were a couple of old men, who had brought two little imps to see the wonders of the day. Their only garments consisted of

pointed helmets, with flaps, made of silk, but their small bronzed bodies were set off by numerous gold ornaments. Regarding the scene from a latticed bullock-cart, which had a pagoda-shaped top, painted blue, sat a young woman. Her jet black hair, shining with cocoa-nut oil, was curiously twisted up into an erect loop, on the top of which three triangular pieces of wrought gold were stuck. Her features, although somewhat broad, were good, her skin was soft and clear, she had a mild countenance, and would have been pretty, had she not been disfigured by a heavy nose-ring. This ugly ornament is, on less solemn occasions, replaced by a gold button, which has a much more agreeable effect. Something was evidently going on in the midst of a distant crowd, for I could see the flash of steel weapons. I beckoned to a soldier who stood near me, and asking him what it might be, he told me that the natives were playing at certain games with swords and daggers, which, he added, they could manage with marvellous dexterity. "Much better than we could, ma'am." In return I remarked that the people appeared to be enjoying themselves in a very orderly manner, and asked if he liked them. "Oh yes, ma'am," he replied, "they be a quiet set of people if we lets them alone."

Men with banners came trooping along, and bands of musicians marched past, with clarionets and tom-toms and cymbals, and then a procession of young women advanced in couples; they were draped in red cotton, with saffron-coloured borders, which set off their lithe forms to the greatest advantage. Their rounded arms, covered with silver and glass bangles, were crossed over their shapely bosoms, and on their heads they balanced large shallow black pots, filled with some plant which looked like canary-coloured grass, and was probably the early shoots of some sort of grain grown in the dark. As they bore their rural offering to the water, they presented a singularly striking and graceful appearance.

In the middle of August the Hindoos celebrate the birthday of their favourite Krishna,* the laughter-loving, the most *débonnaire* of sylvan gods, who led a glorious forest life, dancing and swinging, and eating curds, with the milk-maids.† Every temple devoted to Krishna has its annual festival, when the principal acts of his youth are rehearsed in dumb show. He is

* Krishna is the sun in Irish, as well as in Sanskrit.

† Krishna and the nine gopia, who are clearly the Apollo and Muses of the Greeks, usually spend the night in music and dancing.

carried to large halls, or mandabars, where butter and curds are presented to him; he visits groves of tamarind and Palmyra-trees, where the gopis (milkmaids), are supposed to bear him company, and have their representatives in the temple dancing-girls. He sails over the sacred tank on a raft, and is carried round his domains on a lofty car, amidst the acclamations of the people. Women and children crowd in large numbers to these festivities. "It may be seen," says Ward, "that the pious heart of woman, and the stronger sense of man, have turned away from the monstrous stories of older mythology, to a deity who, at least, appeals to human sympathies."

The loves of this god and his sweet mistress, Rhâda, have been the theme of many a poet, and are, together with his other amours (alas! he had sixteen hundred mistresses), chanted at many a feast.*

* In an ancient Sanskrit book there is a curious dialogue respecting Krishna's immoralities. A King asks a learned Brahman on what grounds Krishna's mode of life can be justified. "Resolve, devout saint, this my doubt." The sage replies, "The transgressions of virtue, and the daring acts which are witnessed in superior beings, must not be charged as faults to those glorious persons, as no blame is imputed to fire, which consumes fuel of every description. Let no other than a superior being ever even in thought practise the same. . . . . Those beings, oh! King, who are

Krishna was Vishnu himself in mortal mould. He is believed to have been miraculously preserved from the power of relations who, seeking to destroy him, directed that a general slaughter of all new-born infants should take place. He was removed to the house of Nana, a cowherd, in remembrance of which, on the second day of the festival, the cattle-keepers hold a great jubilee among themselves, and go about in bands, dancing round in circles, with loud cries of "Govinda! govinda!" a dance which is supposed originally to have typified the sun and the planets. They also amuse themselves by pelting one another with curds. I had a great desire to see something of this rural fête, but it was not to be. My poor little Bustle, my faithful friend, the companion of many a sad and lonely hour, lay dying, and I would not have left his side had Krishna himself descended from the skies and ruled the fun.

The holidays in honour of Ganesa, or Gan-

beyond the reach of personal feelings, have no interest in good deeds done in this world, nor do they suffer any detriment from the contrary. How much less can there be any relations of good or evil between the Lord of all beings, brute, mortal, and divine, and the creatures over whom he rules." We are not informed whether or not the King was satisfied with the wise man's reply.

puti, take place at the beginning of August. Ganputi is supposed to have been the elephant-god worshipped by the original tribes in the forests of Western India. He is a very funny fellow, and the Hindoos exhibit to perfection their strange, grotesque turn of mind in worshipping him as the god of wisdom and prudence. His festival forms part of a sequence of days in honour of Mrittáker (earth). One does not exactly see why this god should be included in earth-worship, unless it may be from his pure material and very hasty origin. Ganputi was made by Parvati, the beautiful wife of Shiva, and formed out of the turmeric and oil which she scraped from her body whilst bathing.*

Another of the many stories in circulation respecting the birth of the god relates that once upon a time there lived a giant called the Elephant-Faced, who, by severe penance, obtained a boon from Shiva, that the gods should do his bidding, that he should be invulnerable to every weapon, and that he should not meet death by gods, or men, or animals. Right cruelly he used his power, and the gods in sorrow betook

* The Hindoos still anoint themselves thus before stepping into the water, the poorer classes using mustard instead of turmeric.

themselves to Shiva. Shiva, walking pensively with Parvati, in the shady groves on the slopes of the Himalayas, came to a decorated hall. Amidst its wall-pictures the symbolic letters of himself and his sakti were inscribed. They assumed the forms of a male and female elephant, from which was instantly born the elephant-shaped deity, neither god, nor man, nor beast, yet all in one. He instantly assumed the sovereignty of the celestial bands, and went forth to meet Asura. Keeping in mind the letter of Shiva's promise, he used no ordinary weapon, but snapt off his right tusk and threw it at his foe. Asura, in terror, assumed the form of a bandicoot, or large rat, when Ganputi leaped upon him, and impressed him as his vehicle. The god was born, according to one story, with a human head, which was unfortunately reduced to ashes by a glance from the eye of Shani, when the gods assembled to look at the new-born babe. Parvati was in despair, and its place was in haste supplied by that of the first animal found—a female elephant with one tusk.

Some people insist upon a resemblance between Janus and Ganesa. Janus presided over the beginning of everything, and was always invoked in every undertaking. He was the porter of

Heaven, "the opener," the guardian deity of gates, and sacrifices of cakes, barley, incense and wine were offered to him. Ganesa is the remover of difficulties to be first invoked—he is the guardian of entrances, gates, and ways, and once a year he is publicly honoured, and receives offerings of cakes, flowers, and sweetmeats.

Before the important day of his festival, hundreds of clay images of the god may be seen, set out in the verandahs to dry. In due time they are painted and gilt, and put on shelves for sale. The very poor make their own Ganputis, which they daub with a little colour or a morsel of gold leaf, begged from a richer neighbour. In the shops they vary in price, from a handful of cowries to five or six rupees. The best specimens are carefully modelled and skilfully painted, and then finished off with a peculiar sort of varnish, which gives the figure the effect of being enamelled. The god is charming—he looks the picture of good-humoured indolence, or would do so were it not for the sagacious twinkle in his small eyes. His trunk reclines upon his ample bosom, and then curls up in a jaunty fashion, his ears stick out from under a triple crown, and his four arms are comfortably supported. He bears in

his hand a goad, or sceptre, and a rice cake; the fourth hand is open, as if in the act of giving a blessing; his trousers are white, embroidered with gold, and he wears a muslin shirt, so draped as to show a portion of his round stomach; and he is covered with jewelry. The day before the image is purchased, a general cleaning takes place. (These festivals are intimately connected with sanitary regulations.) Pails of white and coloured washes, and tins of paint, are to be seen in all directions. When the house is swept and garnished, the image is brought home, and the deity which is to be—he is not yet divine—ceremoniously installed, and the chamber in which it is put lighted up according to the means of its owner.

When the Brahman arrives, he sits near the master of the house, and consecrates the idol by reciting certain Sanskrit verses from his book; and throwing over it rice flour coloured red, he pretends to bring the god into the image. Offerings of fruits and sweetmeats are then placed before it, and the master of the house falls down in front of his god, and prays him to be gracious to him and his family. Of course, the officiating Brahman is duly reward-

ed. By the poor the image is kept a day and a half, but longer by those who can afford to make the period a season of feasting. The divinity gradually fades out of the idol, and it is carried in procession to the tank, and with much ceremony committed to the water, along with expressions of regret at its absence, until the following year. This is done at night, but as he returns home, no man may look at the sky, for one night Ganputi had a fall from his favourite steed, at which the moon laughed. (The Hindoos consider the moon to be a male deity.) Enraged at such an insult, the god of prudence cursed the moon, and all who should look at her, but amended the matter by restraining all from looking at her on his birthday; wherefore the Hindoos studiously avoid glancing at her on this particular night, for fear of incurring calamity during the year; and if by any accident they happen to see it, they try to provoke their neighbours to revile them, and comfort themselves with the idea that the calamities incurred will be all comprehended in that.

Ganputi had many favourites, but he lived and died a bachelor, contrary to the habit of the gods; and when his mother hinted marriage

to him, he gallantly avowed his determination to wed no wife less beautiful than Parvati. For this reason, we are told, he is always represented sitting at the corners of streets, at the thresholds of temples, in the chief places of concourse, looking for a bride. The form of reverence which, according to the letter of the ritual, should be paid to Ganputi, is often imposed as a punishment by the schoolmasters of Western India upon their pupils. The worshipper, or victim, must strike himself sharply on the head with his knuckles, and then perform toppaum —that is, cross his arms over his breast, lay hold of his right ear with his left hand, and his left with his right hand, and then crouch down. Even the gods so reverence Ganputi. It is interesting to watch the women returning from market carrying their idols, whilst the children hug their miniature gods to their bosoms. The lighted shrines, of which we obtained a peep through many a half-opened doorway, were tasteful and pretty.

At the end of August a small festival takes place in honour of the god Anauta, the personification of Eternity, which would have escaped my observation, had not one of the grooms made his appearance with a bracelet round his

black wrist, made of gold thread, and ornamented with little crimson silk tassels, an article called an Anaut Dora, which on this day is bought and worshipped.

CHAPTER IV.

The Dasara, or Ten Days' Feast—The Temple of Dymavavera—Deccan Ponies—Sacrifice of a Sheep—The Shrine of Deva—The Feast of Lamps—Festivities in honour of Vishnu—Cholera in Belgaum—Appeal to an Idol for Protection—A Charming Scene—Constitution of the Hindoo—Ceremonies and Offerings—A Mistake—Cock-fighting—The Hindoo Character.

THE Dasara, or ten days' feast, which takes place at the end of September, is supposed to relate to the autumnal equinox. It is really a period of national rejoicing that the rains are at an end, and that the occupations which have been suspended can be resumed. One story goes that, on the day of its commencement, Ráma marched against the demon King of Ceylon. It was therefore considered by the Máhrattas of old a proper time for commencing their plundering expeditions, and re-opening the feuds that had slumbered. During the Dasara, worship is paid to Parvati, the wife of

Shiva. She figures under many names, and is indiscriminately called Bhávani (the cruel goddess of the Thugs); Kali (a fury smeared with gore); Durga (who delights in bloody, and especially human sacrifices, revels in war, and reigns over fortresses); and Devi (the iron-sceptred, the goddess of thunder) the goddess. "Let the victim offered to Devi, if a buffalo, be five years old, and if human, twenty-five." This is ordained in the Kálika Purana.*

Such is the divinity worshipped at this period. Her image is, on the tenth day, thrown into the water. The Hindoos commence the sacred period with careful ablutions, after which they worship their household gods and their religious books, and then repair to the temples, each bearing bunches of flowers, and a branch of the pallas-tree (Butea Frondosa), which is regarded as representing gold, and is held highly sacred, and indispensable in commemorating this day. All who consider themselves of the military race worship their implements of war. Sheep and goats are sacrificed, and horses and other animals are adorned with garlands brought to be daubed in the blood. In the evening there is a great deal of feasting. With one exception all

* See MOOR'S *Hindoo Pantheon*, *p.* 82.

classes enjoy themselves, but it is a doleful day for the little boys, it being considered a propitious time for sending them to school.*

The Dasara is not a comfortable period for English families. The Hindoo servants expect holidays, in order to visit the temples, and those of other religions ask leave to join the crowd and see the fun. Out of the Hindoo year at least eighty-five days are holidays, being devoted to religious festivals, marriages, commemorations of ancestors, &c. Those of the Mahomedans are not quite so numerous.

As we were returning from our drive on the eve of the great day, we saw that many of the temples, scattered over the country, were illuminated. The brilliant effect of the lights, which shone through the fine foliage of the sacred groves, was very striking. In one edifice, dedicated to Durga, the sacred fire had been kindled, and up shot the forked flames, as the devotees fed it with rice and clarified butter. The butter used on such occasions must be made from cow's milk. The following morning I rose early, as I

* One of the old Saxon chronicles mentions no fewer than twenty-four unlucky days in a year, and an old astrologer of the Middle Ages asserts that there are twenty-eight days on which, if children are sent to school, they will become apt scholars.

had heard that a good many holiday folk were likely to be about outside the fort. I found a curious group of people assembled under the main guard. The goorow was trimming the shrine of Durga, the exterior of which was wreathed with fresh green branches of sugar-cane, and the inside lit up by many wicks floating in cocoa-nut oil. The lights placed in a shrine must be so arranged as not to cast the shadow of the idol in front, for even were a Brahman to cross it would be counted a great sin.

Durga was decked out in a muslin petticoat, and wreathed with lovely flowers, a pure white blossom being stuck in each of her eight black hands (what a profanation!). Her throne was heaped up with half-expanded buds of the glorious yellow champac flower. Her attendant lighted melted ghi at her feet, throwing in a deep red powder as it blazed up, and muttered some short sentences, probably in Sanskrit. He then placed little heaps of rice about, and a nim leaf with a half-stripped plantain, on which was a betel-nut, and breaking a cocoa-nut, he poured the sweet milk over the image. This done, two most extraordinary figures advanced, and stood on each side of the shrine. Paired, but not matched, they were exceedingly dissimilar in appearance; the one was coarse, dark, wrapped

in an ample blue savi, and covered with silver ornaments; the tall, slender form of the other was draped from head to foot in white, which gave her a ghost-like appearance. She had a pale brown skin, finely-cut features, a grave, even sad expression of countenance, and long, soft hair, perfectly white, flowing over her shoulders. To my mind she was the exact type of the Witch of Endor. I learnt that she was a Brahmane. Both these women must in some way have been attached to the service of the temples. Each held in her hand a chowri, an instrument of remote antiquity,* which she waved before the idol. In the oldest sculptures the gods are represented with chowri-bearers, whose duty it was to flap away such flies as dared to settle upon their divine persons. In this instance the long handles were of silver, beautifully embossed, and from them fell the hair of the chamara, or wild cow, which is exquisitely fine, and of a pale yellow tint. The Brahmane also held a silver vessel of curious form, containing the grey ashes of burnt cow-dung, supposed to purify from sin, and with it she signed the forehead of each votary, as she came up, murmured her petition or prayer, and made her little offering to Durga.

* The chowri is a necessary appendage to royalty among the Hindoos.

I went on my way across the common to the little temple erected to Dymavavera, who had been dismissed from the fort in the old Mahomedan days. A platform had been erected before it, so that I could not see the interior, for over it stood sentinel a buffalo, with huge pointed horns, stained red; and its colourless eyes seemed to regard me with such cold fury that, as I looked it in the face, I walked backwards for some time, and then, turning, sped away.

Numbers of Deccan ponies were out this day —handsome, lively little animals still, though the breed has degenerated sadly. Some of them were mounted by boys of a wealthy class, but they did not shine in horsemanship—as a rule, they were held on by their attendants. Their paces were shown to greater advantage by certain men, who bestrode their bare backs with graceful ease—wild-looking beings, with long black hair, which caught the wind, and fluttering drapery of dingy white. One individual came briskly along on a white bullock, a sleek, serene-looking creature, with a handsome brass collar round its neck; and there were others that wore garlands of superb yellow marigolds, strings of flowers peculiar to the East, which have a charming effect. Troops of peasants

were trudging along towards the town, laden with sugar-cane, an offering to their idols, who, in turn, were expected to bestow prosperity upon the ripening crops. Not so pleasant to see were the reeking goat and lamb-skins which were carried past.*

* "If the animal offered be a sheep or a goat, as is always the case the first day, the officiating Brahman, after bathing it in the river or in the house, puts his left hand on its forehead, marks its horns with red lead, and reads an incantation, in which he offers it up to the goddess. 'I sacrifice this goat to thee, that I may live in thy heaven to the end of ten years.' He then reads an incantation in the ear, and puts flowers and sprinkles water on its head. The instrument with which the animal is killed is consecrated by placing upon it flowers, red lead, &c., and writing upon it the incantation, which is given to the disciples of Durga. The Brahman next puts the instrument of death upon the neck of the animal, and, after presenting him with a flower as a blessing, into the hands of the person who is appointed to slay the victim, who is generally the blacksmith, but sometimes a Brahman. The assistants put the animal's neck into an upright post, with an opening at the top to admit the neck, the body remaining on one side of the post, and the head on the other. A vessel containing a plantain is placed upon a plantain leaf, after which the blacksmith cuts off the head at one blow, and another person holds up the body, and drains the blood upon the plantain in the basin. If the person who performs the sacrifice does not intend to offer the flesh to Durga, the slayer cuts only a small morsel from the neck, and puts it on the plantain, when someone carries it and the head, and places them

Returning that evening in the dark, we heard a great noise of voices and music, and saw a crowd at the end of the street, assembled round a tall pagoda, brilliantly illuminated. Our groom, with the secretiveness which is so strongly marked in the Hindoo character, was unwilling that I should approach it, and declared that it was a corpse on its way to the burning ghât. Nothing daunted, I hastened up the broad and now solitary bit of road which led to it. There the ground had been carefully smoothed and swept, and marked with lines, triangles, and cabalistical characters in white. This was the work of the astrologers.*

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before the image, putting on the head a lighted lamp. After all the animals have been thus killed, and some of the flesh and heads carried before the image, the officiating Brahman repeats certain prayers over the offerings, and presents them to the goddess, with the blood which fell on the plantains; then, taking the blood from the basin, he puts it on a plantain leaf, which he cuts into five parts, and presents to the four goddesses who attend upon Durga, at whose worship it is necessary to employ the sacred jar, which is marked with combined triangles, denoting the union of Shiva and Durga."—WARD'S *View of the History, Literature, &c., of the Hindoos.*

* "The triangle is called tricòna, which it literally means, and has been explained to me by a Brahman as the symbol of certain deities or powers, and as the type of triune co-equality, and thence applied by some to the three great powers conjointly. A point represents the

I at last got close to the object which had excited my curiosity, but had to quicken my steps, for, borne on a platform carried by several men, it was already on the march. It proved to be a beautiful semi-transparent shrine, with a richly-gilt bulb-shaped dome. It was lit by numbers of little lamps and coloured lanterns. Perceiving a soldier, I asked him to help me to the front, which he obligingly did. There was no corpse in the beautiful shrine, which contained a half-length figure of Devi. Attended by priests and musicians, it was carried about, I believe, until dawn, and after being worshipped by the people, was taken, with much ceremony, to the tank, and thrown into the water.

The Dewali, or Feast of Lamps, is a festival which lasts five days, commencing with the new October moon. It appears to be consecrated to two goddesses, one of whom is the ferocious Kali; but the other is a milder divinity—Lakshmi,

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deity—having neither length nor breadth, and self-existing, containing nothing; a circle Brahm, eternity—having neither beginning nor end, unity, perfection; a circle enclosing a triangle, and a triangle enclosing a circle, have also mysterious allusions, like similar hieroglyphics among Freemasons and others, to Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, not easily comprehended."—MOOR'S *Pantheon.*

the consort of Vishnu, who rose from the sea spray with a lotus in her hand.* (The lotus is a symbol of humidity, and marks an aquatic relation in its bearer.) This goddess assumes many characters, and the difficulty of threading one's way in the most cursory manner through the mazes of Hindoo mythology may be imagined when we learn that "Lakshmi, as well as Bhavani, is considered as the queen of beauty; and, indeed, their characters will be found to melt into each other." At this festival she is worshipped as the goddess of prosperity (in spite of which the principal amusement of the Dewali is gambling). The houses are cleaned and illuminated, and a quadrangular floor is made in front of each verandah, painted with different coloured powders. All the treasure in the house is collected and worshipped in the house of Lakshmi, and at night a light is made and dedicated to Yama ("the holy king, who judges the dead. His image is that of a green man, with red garments and inflamed eyes, having a crown on his head and a flower stuck in his hair, sitting on a buffalo with a club in his right hand. His dreadful teeth, grim aspect, and terrific shape fill the inhabitants of

* Venus Marina, who is also called Pedma, or Lotus, the symbol of female beauty.—MOOR.

the three worlds with terror"), and fireworks are let off.

One of the principal days is that on which Vishnu is fabled to have killed a giant and entered his city early in the morning. The women, having adorned themselves, go before him with lighted lamps. On this day the Hindoos rise very early, fill the house with lights, anoint their bodies with perfumed ointment, and bathe. New clothes and ornaments are put on, and the children are decorated. When this is done the mistress of the family performs a ceremony called Arti—placing wicks in silver or brass dishes, symbolic of the removal of all their difficulties and of a happy new year, when each male member of the family makes her a present of money. Sweetmeats are distributed, and friends invited to dinner. The festivities are then allowed to slumber until the last day of the moon, which is dedicated to Sarasvati, the goddess of learning. She is represented with a lyre,* and is known

* "Sarasvati, whose husband was the creator Brahma, possesses powers of imagination and invention, which may justly be termed creative, and is therefore adored as the patroness of the fine arts, especially of music and rhetoric. She is also honoured as the inventress of the Sanskrit language, of the Devanagari characters, and of the sciences which writing perpetuates, so that all her attributes corre-

by the name of Vadhipujan, or the worship of the shops. All the merchants close their accounts this evening; new journals, ledgers, and day-books are bought; new entries are made in the account books; writers are sent to different shops, with money to credit in their names, and Sarasvati is invoked to render the year prosperous. The Brahmans are well paid, and servants receive a present of money. At the Dewali extravagant sums are spent upon feasting, and it is to be feared that the Hindoo hospitality, like the showy hospitality occasionally exercised in Europe, is more the result of pride than of benevolence.

During this festival I took every opportunity of driving through the town, the houses of which were profusely decorated with, what our little four-year-old called "mud pies with flowers stuck into them"—decorations which were reproduced at home with endless improvements. The illuminations were got up with theatrical effect. One verandah which took my fancy was adorned with bushes of the double golden marigold in full bloom, interspersed with round dishes of melted fat full of lighted wicks; coloured lanterns were suspended from the ceil-

spond with those of Minerva Musica, in Greece or Italy, who invented the flute and presided over literature."

ings and ran along the cornices; and in the centre, placed upon a pedestal and surrounded by a halo of light, was a figure, more Chinese than Indian in appearance, representing no divinity of my acquaintance. Groups of young girls, with coronets of yellow flowers on their shining black heads, were squatted about. From their peculiar appearance and the vicinity of the house to the temples, I took them to be Telugu dancing girls. The bazaars were ablaze with light. Many of the verandahs and shops were cleared out, arranged as rooms, and lined with splendid satins, and the peculiarly richly-braided silks known as Kingeal, and long oval glass lamps were suspended from on high. The owners and their families, with handsome carpets under them, were receiving their friends. Bands of music and crowds of people paraded the street. Nothing daunted by the noise and flaming torches which were thrust almost under his nose, Hotspur trotted out, for nothing appears to alarm an Arab horse.

One evening, leaving the brilliant scene, we plunged into the dark, stormy night. The road was only to be traced by the fierce lightning, which ushered in a frightful thunderstorm, accompanied by sheets of rain. Alas! for the poor holiday folk! The natives consider that

rain during the Feast of Lamps is a presage of misfortune. It is somewhat hard that this part of the Deccan, having finished with its own tempestuous season, comes in for the tail of the return Madras monsoon. While driving out, we noticed a group of pretty white flowers, which had sprung up on the downs, shaded by two or three fine old trees, and looking as if they had been prepared for a flower-show, or some other such gathering. Alas! they were set out to be ready should any case of cholera appear amongst the European soldiers. Some men in the native lines had died; the death-rate in the district was as high as three hundred a week, and a few cases had occurred in the town. Belgaum is seldom visited by this disease, and the people attribute this immunity to the foresight of the old khan, who was a man in advance of his age, and looked to the sanitary condition of his town; the real fact being that it owes its healthy condition to the laterite on which it stands, the water which percolates through it being excellent. Still a few of the natives had succumbed to the disease,* and a general feel-

* The feeble constitution of the Hindoo is incapable of resisting serious illness, or any sudden shock to the system. How can it be otherwise? The poor very rarely taste meat—they confine themselves, upon ordinary occasions, to

ing of alarm was abroad. Under these distressing circumstances it was determined that a much-venerated idol, which was kept in the house of a Brahman in Belgaum, should be brought forth to the green near the fort, worshipped, and appealed to for protection against the scourge. It was still early morning, when, curious to see the spectacle, I passed out by the main gate. The heavy dew glittered upon the grass, the waters of the tank lay like a sheet of silver, and as I picked my way round the worn tombs of the long-disused Portuguese cemetery, glanced up at the brave red walls, and paused a moment to regard the jungly hills, as they rose fold after fold, rejoicing in the misty sunshine, I thought that I had seldom looked upon a more charming scene.

The temple of the expelled goddess was covered in, several huts had sprung up around it, and tents were erected. That which contained the sacred figure was distinguished by a

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a diet of inferior rice, cheap grain pulse, unripe fruit and berries, and fish, when it can be procured, and this insufficient in quantity. We knew a woman and her daughter (it was no solitary instance) who considered themselves well off, and their monthly outlay for food was four shillings. With the rich it is of course different. "It must be confessed," says Mr. Moor, "that both Hindoo and Mahomedan cookery is in many instances excellent."

flat circular silk flag trimmed with fringe. This is peculiar to the Fakirs. Women in mustard-coloured drapery sat in the huts, with a curious article before them, of the signification of which I was ignorant. It was like a shallow round bath (such as we use in England), covered with red cotton, the rim being set round with brass bands, and other queer objects in metal; and I had seen something like it carried about the streets on gala days. In one hut there was a pyramidal erection of shawls, on which were stuck two Egyptian-looking heads in brass, with staring black eyes—possibly masks. All the shrines were visited in their turn, but that of the goddess, whose name I, alas! was never able to learn, was of course the principal object of attraction. She was so smothered up with drapery, gold, and flowers that I could only see her head, on which rose a cone of stiff curls. The centre ornament of her girdle, and the throne on which she squatted, were all of worked silver, and apparently very old.

As no one took much notice of my presence, I stood quite close, and watched the troops of young women who came up in bands, chatting and laughing. The scarlet mark across their brows, and the disfiguring nose-ring, indicated that they were wives; that they were mothers

was evident from the bronzed babies, all eyes, which strode across their hips—little creatures with red cotton helmets, their only garment. The women had tall, full figures, and carried themselves gracefully; nor were their faces unpleasing; fine eyes and teeth were universal. Many even possessed good features and soft brown skins, which told that they were not people of very low caste. Their simple offerings were contained in the baskets which they poised upon their shapely heads, and which contained greasy messes of boiled rice, little plates of butter, curds, and highly-perfumed flowers. Among others I caught the rich scent of the chumpa, a favourite offering. These dainties were delivered over to the priest, a tall, dark man (singularly dark, if he was a Brahman), who wore a full white robe, edged with red. Each gift was laid at the feet of the goddess, whilst the devotee performed her little puja, placing the palms of her hands together, raising them several times above her head, and whispering a prayer. Meanwhile three hideous old women, armed with chowries, made it their business to pass from shrine to shrine, flapping their yellow cows' tails, and in nasal tones reciting a verse, probably in Sanskrit, at each sacred spot.

Whilst thus gazing about, a man, whose appearance was most remarkable, presented himself. He was piebald; his skin was smooth, and apparently quite healthy, but the whole of his body and limbs was marked with large splotches of straw colour and dark brown. I was surprised to see such a number of deep yellow dresses, until I remembered that the colour, being that of Hindoo mourning, was appropriate for the occasion. There was a tent, in which a number of little brass vessels, candlesticks, saucers, and lamps, were exposed, as I imagined, for sale. I had seen similar articles at the Sattara fair; the shapes were elegant, and on my return home, I begged that G—— would let one of his men go and buy some of them; but horror was depicted upon the man's face when he heard our proposal, for these articles were not to be had for love or money, being votive offerings to the temples, and belonging to the priests.

Wandering about the fort one afternoon, I came upon a knot of people who were casting pieces of cocoa-nut before the image of Durga. Seeing, however, that one of the men was holding a fine cock under his arm, and encouraging it to peck insects from the shrine, I asked the sentry if the bird was about to be sacrificed,

and determined to make off with all speed if that was the case. He assured me that they had no such intention, and went on to observe that Hindoos were queer people. "You know, ma'am, coming to the figure with their bird is just like our going to church." It was doubtless a fighting-cock, that sport being popular all over India. Before a match comes off, the Hindoo takes his bird to perform puji before his favourite idol, whilst the Mahomedan conveys it to the mosque, in order that it may be touched by the Moslana. It is by no means unusual to see a man walking about holding a feathered favourite, partly because it is a pet, and partly for the chance of meeting with some one under similar circumstances, on which the parties stop, and their cocks have a passage at arms. I believe that this is also a Chinese custom.

For several days the maidan outside the fort was the scene of considerable agitation, yet it was not the time for any particular religious celebration. From dewy eve until the sun was high it was thronged with people, and there were frequent processions, accompanied by loud music.

Early one morning the tom-toms sounded with such unusual vigour that I was induced to

set forth, in order to see if anything unusual was about to take place. Crowds of Hindoos were assembled round temporary tents which had been erected; pieces of palm-leaf matting were stretched over horizontal poles, and closed up at the further end; outwardly they were adorned with flags, and the usual insignia of the priesthood, made of rose-coloured silk and fringe, stretched over a circular frame of bamboo. The people were very busy. Unwilling to intrude upon their religious ceremonies, I regarded the scene from a little distance, when a young man, evidently of high caste, from his pale brown complexion, made me such a profound salaam that I was encouraged to address him, and found that he spoke English fluently. He told me he was a writer, and had received his education at the Belgaum High-school. The first object that attracted my attention was the headless trunk of a large white-wooled sheep (white sheep were rare in the district). I turned to my friend, who informed me that the animal had just been sacrificed before an image of Durga. My self-constituted guide asked if I should like to see the shrine of the idol. Nothing loth, I signified my assent, and we stepped within the principal tent. In the middle of it was an altar, on which was squat-

ted a large brass image of the cruel goddess. I was able to examine the workmanship, which was executed in delicate patterns, but in places the tracery was worn away, and the figure was evidently very old. A handsomely embossed brass dish was placed at the foot of the throne, on which lay the gory head of the animal that had just been offered up. The oblique eyes of Durga appeared to be looking down upon it with a hideous leer. Beneath, on the floor, were two jagged black pieces of basaltic rock, in a hollow between which the sacrifice had been consummated, and the place was reeking with blood.

I could not but regard the scene with awe, for it is more than probable that very many years had not elapsed since the image before me had been propitiated by human sacrifices, the cruel practice in Poonah having existed as late as the latter half of the past century, when it was forbidden by the enlightened Peishwa, Balhagee Bajee Rao. It may probably have continued much longer in the forests and jungles far south of the Krishna, which were almost untrodden by Europeans, until taken possession of by the English about the year 1818. Scattered around in other parts of the tent lay many animals, principally goats

and lambs, tied together in couples, the poor things apparently already nearly dead.

Not being inclined to linger, I turned to leave the tent, but stood amazed by the appearance of a figure in the doorway, that of a young, tall, and handsome woman, closely draped in a dark blue garment, bordered with red; her forehead and temples were painted with the brightest vermilion, and a many-stringed necklace of cowrie shells lay upon her shapely bosom. Beneath one arm she bore a long four-sided object which somewhat resembled a quiver; under the other a thick coil of rope, the end of which she held in her hand, lighted, with a high flame springing from it—the sacred fire which had been kindled before the idol when the victim was slain. This young woman was, I understood, the priestess or handmaiden who tended the image; but though one might have been inclined to regard her as the very incarnation of Paganism, one could hardly believe that such a creature would ever have delighted in the shedding of human blood, for her carriage was dignified, and she possessed a kind of wild beauty which was exceedingly striking.

We then visited some of the smaller tents, but they only contained brass masks, with glass eyes, and native offerings, such as I had seen

before, the latter including numbers of bells of various designs, in which the monkey god and the hooded snake predominated.

Emerging upon the green, the friendly writer pointed to the crimson spots where other beasts had been slain, and told me that if I waited for a short time I should have an opportunity of seeing the manner in which the victim was offered up by the priest, and the puji, or homage, performed by the people. I was greatly tempted to do so, but finally turned away, nauseated by what I had seen, and unable to make up my mind to witness the dying struggles of the animal. The crowd had collected into groups, and were hastening away over the maidan, and loud music struck up. The tom-toms boomed, and the clanging sound of the cymbals mingled with the shrill blasts of an enormous horn, to summon another band of devotees to the celebration of their idolatrous rites.

With a grateful salaam to my obliging conductor, I bent my steps homeward. Pondering over the curious scene I had witnessed, I recalled to mind the words of a great writer,* which completely chimed in with the tone of my reflections. "To find ourselves," he says, "among a people who really believe in gods, and

* Professor Max Müller.

heroes, and ancestral spirits, who still offer human sacrifices, or, at all events, burn the flesh of animals on their altars, trusting that the scent will be pleasant in the nostrils of their gods" (in this case it was the odour of blood), "is as if the zoologist could spend a few hours with the megatheria, or the botanist among the wavy ferns of the forests buried beneath our feet."

I was not acquainted with the curious manner in which snakes cast their skins, until I came to examine some of the disused garments of these reptiles, which had been picked up in the Cannara jungles. The animal, in throwing its skin off, reverses it, as was clearly visible in one specimen, which measured upwards of twelve feet. The skin which had covered the eyes was concave, and the scales were slightly indented. The tissue was like that of very fine crisp silver paper; the semi-transparent scales were light grey, but on the ridge of the back, and particularly towards the tail, they assumed a darker hue.

Those glimpses which I obtained of the Hindoo festivals were to me very interesting, for the simple rites I saw practised, the very form of the instruments employed, the arrangement of the ceremonies, were derived from a remote antiquity. Of their darker side I of course saw

nothing, but a very dark side there is, and doubtless these frequent periods of extreme licence keep alive and foster all that is bad in the Hindoo character. The stranger arrives i India well inclined towards "the mild Hindoo, full of gracious ideas respecting his kindred race. He finds them a quiet people, courteous, fond of children, *apparently* humane to animals, excellent nurses in case of sickness, tolerably honest, and thoroughly temperate. Alas! if his glance penetrates beneath the surface, he discovers that they are an idle, dissolute, effeminate, sly people, who practise the rites of their loathsome idol worship in ways which perfectly reliable authors tell us cannot be explained in English print. Their want of truth is universal. They believe lying to be absolutely necessary in everyday transactions, and no judge will rely upon the testimony of a Hindoo witness.*

These are frightful national faults, but to my mind the wonder seems to be that with such a vicious religion the Hindoo should not be worse

* The Hindoos are very fond of law-suits, and I have been told some curious instances of the manner in which they dramatise their evidence. Mock trials are sometimes got up in secret for the purpose of training the witnesses for their appearance in the real court. In the event of a false case being got up, nothing is thought of a defence based upon equal falsehood.

than he is—that he should possess the good qualities which undoubtedly appertain to his character; for his gods are monsters of iniquity, and their histories are a record of every known crime. Among the crowd of deities to whom they bow down, there is not one who represents the virtues—there is not a high-minded or generous action attributed to a single member of the Pantheon; and their shastras (religious rules as to conduct, and the proper way of observing ceremonies) contain directions which the very Brahmans blush to interpret to people of other religions. Their gods are indeed of this earth, and their adorers neither wish nor expect to meet them in a future state.

With regard to the inward life of the better class of the Hindoos, I have never been able to learn anything, although it is a subject upon which I have frequently conversed with highly intelligent Europeans, who have been years in India. "We know nothing of their family life," was the universal reply to my questions. "Now that the English have brought their families, their habits, and their luxuries, and settled down in the country, there is a greater barrier between the two races than even in the old fighting days. The best of our scholars are but little acquainted with that curious subject of speculation, the

Hindoo mind; and there are scarcely any, even among those who have passed first-rate examinations in Indian languages, who can understand the simple conversation which they may listen to in the bazaars;" a state of things which is, to say the least, very unsatisfactory.

CHAPTER V.

Mahomedan Ceremonies—Commemoration of Paternal Ancestors—Ceremony of Giving of Alms—I'dgah—Brilliant Costumes—The Mola—Religious Mendicants—The "Din"—The Mohurrum—The Syeds and Shias—The Tarbout—Hindoo Imitations of Mahomedan Ceremonies—The Wahibis—House of the Parsi Dead—The Mahrattas—Bazaars—Houses and Gardens—Objects of Veneration—Market of Belgaum.

ALTHOUGH not so much interested in the Mussulman as in the Hindoo festivals, it was a relief to turn to their bloodless and pure faith; and some of the ceremonies which they observe in India are very different from those practised in other countries. In the month of September both the Hindoos and the Mussulmans hold a solemn feast, called the Commemoration of Paternal Ancestors. I saw nothing of the former, but was told that on the sacred day the Hindoos repair to their temples, and make offerings of fire and water to the manes. The

other festival also would have escaped my notice had it not been for the arrival of an old man, who had come to ask permission to be allowed to scatter flowers upon a certain grave-stone, which, cracked across, lay in a corner of the garden, and had very nearly escaped from having been made into the foundation for a fernery. The ancient declared himself to be descended not only from the holy man who lay in this spot, but from the Pir, or saint, who was buried in the large-domed tomb—according to his account, a most celebrated ascetic, who had been interred there "hundreds of years ago." The old man had many tales to tell relating to the fort, and G—— took the opportunity of asking him about some very large cut stones which had been lately dug up in the compound. They were *in situ*, and had evidently formed part of a wall and flooring. The old gentleman was of opinion that they were part of the under-ground passage leading to the open country, which was known to exist.

Determined to see what was going on, I sallied forth, and watching my opportunity, slipped into the minaretted mausoleum. All the graves were wreathed with flowers,* which were

* This care for the unforgotten dead is very touching. A similar custom obtains among the Welsh. I once at

also profusely heaped upon the exterior tombs, and blossoms were scattered about in places where I could perceive no indication that mortal remains were laid; but every shapeless stone which cropped out of the sward had no doubt been carefully registered by the descendants of the Pirs, now a considerable community, and this knowledge would no doubt be transmitted by them to succeeding generations.

All the morning the kindred of the saints kept arriving. Dignified old men in spotless white, each with his bag of flowers, looked up to heaven, turned towards Mecca, and uttered fervent prayers as they flung blossoms on the graves.

I had a wish to see the Mahomedans assembled round their I'dgah, and G—— kindly arranged that I should do so at the ceremony of the Idu-'l-Fitr, or giving of alms, which takes place in October. In the morning after the new moon had been seen, at the expected time knots of people gathered together in the streets, scanning the heavens to hail her appearance, but it was so cloudy that the Lady Moon was

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Creekhowel saw the interior of the church as well as the surrounding graveyard, covered with a mass of Spring blossoms—daffodils, snowdrops, primroses, and violets, forming a very lovely sight.

not visible, and it was said that consequently no ceremony would take place upon the morrow. At last, however, the silver crescent put in a dim appearance, to the great joy of the watchers, who would else have believed that some national misfortune was impending. I'dgah is about a mile from the fort, standing in the midst of an open spot of rising ground, which commands a charming view of blue, castle-crowned Yellerghur, and the dense woods at its feet. The building was set upon a vast platform, but although built upon a similar plan, it had no such architectural pretensions as that at Karhad. It was evidently an old edifice, and probably dated from the time of the Bijipur kings. One of the wings had been shortened, and the steps which led to the little estrade, or pulpit, were not therefore in its centre. It was a very pretty sight to see the people, as they came trooping from under the trees, clad in tight dresses, white as snow, girded with crimson sashes and coloured scarfs of fine wool, crossed over one shoulder. Some replaced the former by shawls of the richest gold embroidery; and that of one man whom I observed was silver and green, showing that he must have been engaged in more than one pilgrimage to Mecca, in order to entitle him to wear the sacred

colour, which was that of his turban as well as of the waist shawl. A brilliant trio knelt down together—they might be brothers—who wore red and gold turbans, and short satin jackets of glowing hues. Some had arrayed themselves in straight-cut gowns of richly brocaded silk, and rolled their heads up in long lengths of muslin, spangled with gold or flecked with silver. One beautiful costume of white and scarlet I admired as particularly handsome. Almost every man was provided with a staff, carved, painted, or plain, according to his means. As the people assembled they squatted down in groups upon the platform in front of the I'dgah, which ere long was completely covered. I was close to a bullock cart, which was filled to overflowing with little boys, with cloth-of-gold caps and coats of many colours. They had brought almonds, toffy, and sweetmeats with them, and enjoyed themselves after the manner of little boys in general.

In a moment the busy hum sank into silence, for the Mola was approaching. He came slowly on, a dignified old man, with a snow-white beard, big turban, and flowing robes all white, though underneath grey trousers were seen by chance, which accorded ill with the rest of the dress. Over his head was borne

a magnificent umbrella of crimson silk, fringed with gold bullion. He had a beautiful little Arab horse. The saddle, with its crupper and wide stirrups, was made of red leather, the colour of which was scarcely visible, so thickly was every available point covered with heavy silver bosses; while round the neck of the steed was a three-rowed necklace of similar workmanship.

This gentleman was followed by a dignitary, whose subordinate position was indicated by the inferior size and quality of his umbrella and the simpler trappings of his steed. The procession was closed by men on foot, who carried flags. The silence was so profound that a pin might have been heard to drop when the Mola, dismounting from his horse close to the I'dgah, turned to the multitude, and murmured a few sentences. With one accord, like machines, the people bowed down, each man touching the earth with his forehead, while the priest stood half way up the steps and prayed; and then the assembly rose in prayer, and prostrated themselves as before.

This out-of-door worship was very striking—I had seen the Moslem kneel beneath the mighty dome of St. Sophia, but it was a less glorious canopy than the cobalt vault of the Indian sky.

After a time the Mola ascended to the platform —leaning on a staff or crutch, curved at the top, in order to support the arm, and in an audible voice slowly gave his blessing. After this the people rose to their feet in a moment, and the solemn and pathetic scene became one of noisy absurdity. "The Din" began, each man, with loud vociferations, catching his neighbour by the shoulders and bending his brow upon them with a dexterity which, considering the size of their turbans, could only have been acquired by long practice. A general mirthful embracing then took place. The native police, who were probably Hindoos, looked on, grim and silent, not liking to be hugged; and their mounted officers rode about in all directions, to see that peace was kept. When the people got tired of their "Din," they squatted down in friendly groups.

It was then the turn of the religious mendicants and pilgrims from afar—some of them strange figures—who began to collect alms in a very vehement manner. There were arrivals from Mecca, men with green turbans and white frocks, over which streamed, loosened for the occasion, the long black tuft of hair by which they were eventually to be drawn up to Paradise. They collected their money in long oval

receptacles, which they thrust at people with a rattle.* Some youths with unkempt locks, hard, glittering black eyes, and an air of exceeding wildness, I fancied might be waifs from Abyssinia. There were holy men, who walked about each with his flat birdcage, containing a quail, the meaning of which I know not. Others with bare arms and silver armlets, bore in their hands iron instruments resembling tongs. Many a curious object, the meaning of which I was unable to divine, passed before my eyes. Most clamorous of all (as was natural) were the women pilgrims, frightful old hags, with dirty white dresses, and staves in their hands.

I was very glad to have been present at this curious scene, and to have heard "The Din."

The Mohurrum, or ten days' mourning festival, of the Mahomedans, is the most important re-

* Whilst travelling in the Sahara, I was shown some alms-boxes of the same description, said to be very old. They were egg-shaped, and above a foot in length. The black substance of which they were formed was brilliantly polished by age, and they were engraved with verses from the Koran, in Arabic characters.

They were made from the nut of a rare tree, which grows upon a small island near Zanzibar. This tree, I was told, put forth, at the most, but two leaves in the course of the year, and the single nut it bears takes a prodigious time in reaching maturity—I do not exactly remember the number of years. When dry it becomes as hard as ebony.

ligious ceremony of their year, and on this occasion the anniversary was anticipated with anxiety in Bombay and other large towns. It is a period of general discord between the two great sects, the Syeds and the Shias, and last year there were great riots, in which there was a considerable loss of life. The Mohurrum, a season of wailing and gnashing of teeth, is held in honour of Hassan and Hussein, the sons of Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed, and of his cousin, Ali Ibn Ali Taleb, from whom the race of Syeds are descended, and who were the first alleged martyrs of the Shia sect. After the murder of their father, by contrivance of the Kalif Yesid, the brothers, with their families, removed from Shawn to Medina, where the elder, Hassan, to avoid embroiling the state in civil war, voluntarily abdicated his title as Imam (leader of the faith), and was shortly after poisoned by Yesid. Some years after this the people of Shawn invited Hussein to return and assume his lawful rights as Imam; but on his arrival with his two sons at Shawn, he was treacherously murdered, with all his retinue, on the tenth day of the Arab month Mohurrum. His eldest son alone escaped, and ever since the Syeds and the Shias have been at feud.

In India the festival is celebrated in a manner

peculiar to the country. The sufferings of the martyrs are chanted in the mosques, and many curious ceremonies are observed, during which the congregation beat their breasts and cry "Wai, wai, Hasain, Husain." In considerable places a figure, representing the saint covered with wounds, is borne upon a bier, and little children, with blood-stained clothes, follow it, mounted upon horses. Another distinctive feature of the commemoration is the tarbout, in imitation of a Mahomedan tomb. Formerly every family of distinction collected as many followers as they could to grace the procession of the tarbout to the sea or river into which it was to be thrown.* Formerly the tarbout was as grand as painting and gilding, ivory and silver, could make it; but

* Mr. Moor makes some observations respecting the partial adoption of this ceremony by the Hindoos. "This ceremony, one would imagine, would be confined to Mussulmans; and so it is wherever I have witnessed it—Poonah excepted, where I have seen the Peishwa Booja Rao his brother, Nana Furnaveese, and other persons of the highest distinction, imitate the Mahomedans in the procession and tumult of the Tarbout, and come themselves on elephants preceded by some field-pieces, to fire salutes, to the river to witness their immersion. . . . This is an instance of the Brahmans and other Hindoos being less averse to imitate the customs of other people than the hitherto received opinion would admit."

in these days the ceremony has degenerated, and is only kept up by the lower orders, who make the tarbout of split bamboo and coloured paper. It was, however, this year likely to be a livelier spectacle than usual, for the native soldiers, who, of late years, had been closely kept in their quarters upon the occasion, were to be allowed to bring their tarbouts and join in the procession. The day before there was a great crowd outside the fort, and as an assemblage of Mussulmans, with their clean dresses and bright colours, is always a pretty sight, I went out to witness it. I could have fancied myself at some semi-barbarous carnival. There were large cars covered with green branches and decorated with flags, in which low caste men, intensely black, represented wild beasts; human tigers without grace or beauty, monkeys without agility, and cardboard elephants without sagacity. The latter bore tarbouts upon their backs, in which children were riding, and domed roofs, painted blue, supported upon pillars. For this great occasion a tent was erected upon the chevalier battery, and busy preparations were made to receive the ladies who wished to see the procession and watch the tarbouts as they were stripped of their finery and thrown into the water. Alas! I was not

one of them; for just half an hour before the ceremony was to take place I was passing through the assembled multitude in a tonga, on my way to Goa.

The Indian Mussulmans, with their purer religion and fine moral code, are, as might be expected, a much more truthful people than the Hindoos; but they lack the patience of the latter race, and are haughty and perverse. In this district particularly so, for most of them belong to the reforming Wahabi sect, who desire to bring back the doctrines and observances of Islam to the literal precepts of the Koran, and to the oral instructions which they suppose to have been given by Mahomed. How intolerant and cruel the Wahabis are, all will remember, who have read Palgrave's "Arabia," how, having neither paintings to destroy, like the followers of Savonarola, nor gothic tracery and the tombs of good men and heroes to efface, like our own Puritans, they burnt hecatombs of pipes, bid men abstain from tobacco at the point of the sword, and waged ruthless war against big turbans, light dresses, and every sort of gay apparel.

I did not see any Parsi ceremonies. These Jews of Western India are a small community in Belgaum, but their numbers are probably on

the increase, as a few months ago they laid the foundation of a handsome fire-temple, which is not yet completed. Until lately they had no place for their dead, and last year a well-to-do shop-keeper dying, his relatives applied for permission to dispose of his body in their own house. The request being refused, they bought or built—I know not which—a melancholy little grey stone house, situated near the burning ghât, which they enclosed by a high wall. Before I knew the purpose to which it was to be applied, I used to wonder what sort of people inhabited the sad-looking place, which reminded me of some lone farm-house upon a bleak Scotch moor, and is now the home of the Parsi dead.

In primitive Máhratta every town and village has its own constitution, at the head of which is the Patell, who, with three principal officers, carries into effect the stringent laws which protect the lands of the community. There are also twenty-four persons called the Balowtay and the Alowtay, and the duties which devolve upon some of these officers show such a curious state of society, such strange relations between the two great religious bodies, the Hindoos and the Mahomedans, that I am tempted to give a short abstract from a chapter upon the subject in Mr. Grant Duff's "History

of the Máhrattas." He speaks of things as they existed when he wrote, which is nearly fifty years ago, and remarks that an establishment such as he describes was seldom complete. Hindoos, however, are little given to change, and excepting in great towns, where their manners have suffered some modification, they are very much what they were in past centuries.

"The following are the twelve Balowtay and twelve Alowtay, according to the general, but not universal, opinion of the Máhrattas:—The head of the twelve Balowtay is the carpenter; second, the blacksmith; third, the shoemaker and currier; fourth, the Mhar, or Dher. This is a person of the very lowest order, except the Mang, but in the village establishment his duties are very important. The Mhar acts as scout, as guide, frequently as watchman; he cleans travellers' horses, and is obliged, if required, to carry the traveller's baggage; he is a principal guardian of the village boundaries, and in Maharashta the Mhars are a very active, useful, and intelligent race of people. Fifth, the Mang, who makes all leather ropes, thongs, whips, &c., used by the cultivators; he frequently acts as watchman, and is by profession a thief and executioner; he readily hires himself as an assassin, and when he commits a robbery,

he also frequently murders. The Mangs are not so intelligent as the Mhars; both the one and the other eat the carcasses of cattle that have died of disease, and are exceedingly filthy in all respects. Sixth, the potter; seventh, the barber; eighth, the washerman; ninth, the Goorow, who is a Shooder, and employed to wash, ornament, and attend the idol in the village temple, and, on occasions of feasting, to prepare patrowlee, or leaves, which the Hindoos substitute for plates. They are also trumpeters by profession, and in this capacity were much employed in Máhratta armies. Tenth, the Joshee, or astrologer, is a Brahman, who calculates nativities, foretells lucky and unlucky days, &c.; eleventh, the Bhât, or bard; and twelfth, the Moolana, or Moola, the Mahomedan priest; and it is very strange how he is found engrafted upon the establishment of a Hindoo village. The Moolana has charge of the mosques and burial-places of Mahomedan saints, and manages the affairs of Enam, or freehold lands attached to them. He performs the ceremony at Mahomedan marriages, and ought to be competent to all the duties of a Moola; but he is very often found where there is no Mahomedan family except his own, and is known to the Máhratta population as the person who kills

their sheep and goats, when a sacrifice is performed at temples or in the fields, to propitiate the deities presiding over the Stulls, or great divisions of the village lands. The Moolana likewise kills the sheep for the Katik, who, although frequently mistaken for the butcher, is, in fact, the person who cleans and exposes the meat for sale. The Moolana is entitled to two pice (a small coin), and the heart of every animal he kills for the Katik. Some of the Máhrattas are unmindful of the ceremony, but in general they profess not to eat flesh, unless the heyt has been pronounced by the Moolana, or some Mussulman capable of repeating what renders the flesh nullah, or lawful to be eaten." (These observances were strictly insisted upon by G——'s Hindoo and Mahomedan servants upon the occasion of a feast he gave them, to which they sat down together.) "To account for this extraordinary adoption of Mahomedan observances puzzles the Hindoos.*

* Still more curious is it that sometimes both religious bodies lay claim to the remains of some holy ascetic. This occurred with regard to Kabir, a weaver, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and left behind him a code of morals, said to be very pure. He was also the author of Sakhis, or five thousand pithy sayings. On his death, it is recorded that both Hindoos and Mahomedans claimed the body, the former desiring to burn it, and the latter to

"The Alowtay is a less ancient establishment. Its members are, first, the Sonar, or goldsmith, who is the essayer of coins, as well as the maker of gold and silver ornaments for the richer inhabitants; second, the Jungum, or Goorow, of the Lyngate sect, the tailor; the Kolee, or water-carrier; the Tural, who is at the constant call of the Patell, but whose particular duty is to attend to strangers, and take care of travellers from the moment of their entering the village, of which, if walled, he is the porter. He furnishes all necessary information, as well as supplies, to strangers, and is often very useful to them. The gardener, the Downee Gosanee, is a religious person, who beats the dour, a species of small tambourine; the Gursee, or piper; the Ramosee, or Bheel, also a musician. The two latter are

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bury it, according to their respective rites. While they wrangled over the corpse, Kabir suddenly stood in the midst, and commanding them to look under the shroud, vanished. This they did; but under the winding-sheet they found only a heap of beautiful flowers, one half of which were taken and burned by the Hindoos, and the other half buried with great pomp by the Mussulmans, who erected a grand tomb upon the spot. It is not always that matters of this sort end so peaceably; sometimes the parties desire to celebrate their respective rites at the same time, the result being a free fight. There are in India a few sacred buildings common both to the Hindoos and to the Mahomedans, who worship in them by turns.

professed thieves, and generally hold the office of watchman. The Telee, or oil-seller; the Tambowlee, or pawn-leaf vendor; and the Gonedulee, or beater of the tambhut, or double kettle-drum."

How far the town establishment of Belgaum was complete, I know not. The thieves and assassins who formerly held office had doubtless been suppressed, but many members of the constitution certainly existed. The Goorow still tended the shrine of Durga; the Moolana crept across the maidan (the green) with his lantern and cruise of oil, to light up the Pir's tomb; the slayer of animals made his appearance, and claimed his rights whenever he sacrificed a sheep to Durga's hungry family; and we had oral evidence as to the existence of the musicians.

The town was a good half mile from the fort, and we had often to pass through it. There were three principal streets, from which a number of smaller ones diverged. Those in which the shops stood were called the bazaars. The shops called the Europe shops were kept by Parsis, who sold wines, tinned provisions, groceries, and a thousand miscellaneous articles. Other shops, of a similar kind, in which, however, nothing of a spirituous nature was to be found, belonged to Mahomedans. The superior

Hindoos dealt in stuffs and cottons, and perhaps in secret corners rich pieces of silk were stored. Their shops were open to the street, and their ordinary contents were piled up and exposed to the gaze of all. The Buniers, whose goods were laid out on sloping stalls, dealt in seeds, grains, hardware, &c., in the midst of which sat their owner, doubled up like a monkey, with very little covering save a turban.

There was one watchmaker's shop where an old Hindoo, with little custom, tinkered the instruments confided to his care. Our watches were often carried away in the Puttah Wallee's turban, but they seldom profited much by his care. The natives never use time-pieces, but make impromptu sun-dials with their hands, read the hours in the heavens, and tell the six divisions into which the day is divided by the opening and shutting of the flowers—a function in which, in this climate, they are wonderfully punctual.*

* "It is to Linnæus that we must ascribe the ingenious idea of indicating all the hours by the time at which plants open and shut their corollas. The Swedish botanist created a flower-clock for his own climate; but as, in our latitude, a more brillant and radiant dawn makes the flowers open earlier, Lamarck was obliged to construct for France another clock, which is a little in advance of that of Upsala. . . .

On the eve of a festival it was a lovely sight to see the people in the flower shops, with great baskets brimming over with blossoms, engaged in stringing them into ropes, which as soon as finished, were hung up in festoons for sale. There were strings of exquisite double jessamines, pink and white roses, double marigolds, golden chumpas, and the sacred too-odoriferous champac, changing with the seasons. The garland of the moment appeared to be the most beautiful. In mysterious nooks nym leaves were prepared, along with betel-nuts, cardamum seeds, and many other aromatic and narcotic productions. Sometimes a half-open door would disclose row upon row of painted and gilded idols—Durga, or Ganapati, the monkey Hanuman, the bloodthirsty Kali, or, a pleasanter sight, Lakshmi, the Queen of Beauty, rising from the sea with a lotus-flower in her hand, and an endless succession of divinities.

The sweetie shops were very tempting, until one had tasted their cloying contents. Natives

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The regularity in the opening of flowers has struck even some savage races, who decide their days and apportion their toils according to these phenomena, the regular recurrence of which they have observed."—*The Universe.* F. A. Pouchet, M.D.

are exceedingly fond of sweetmeats, which are given as a treat to the Sepoys. Sugar necklaces of bright colours are hung round the necks of dusky children. The relatives of a prisoner are permitted to supply him with the luxury of sweetmeats. Mention is often made in the papers of the quantity of sweet things eaten by a man under sentence of death, and the culprit will go to the gallows with a sugar-plum in his mouth.

The smaller streets were inhabited by people who followed various occupations, those of one trade congregating together. It was curious to see how quickly the potters, who kept to the outskirts of the town, formed their classically-shaped vessels. A lump of clay was set upon a quickly-revolving wheel, and the potter, without once altering the position of his hands, used his fingers so dexterously that the substance quickly assumed the form dictated by his fancy.

Most of the houses in Belgaum were built with wooden frames, plastered with clay, even the poor having a verandah, in which the ordinary transactions of family life were visibly carried on. Houses of more pretence had a second story, often provided with its own verandah, which, generally speaking, was propped up with sticks, and was too ricketty to be

used. Behind these dwellings were long open courts, with galleries, adorned with some very good wood-carving, generally painted red. Sometimes the front was covered with frescoes, one which particularly struck me being a superb representation of a tiger-hunt, of colossal size. One man, seated on a blue elephant, was fiercely attacking, with a short spear, a large yellow panther, with black spots; another, painted lead colour, was under the feet of a crimson tiger, with huge yellow eyes. On a third fresco a whole pantheon of deities were elaborately represented, and the walls of an inner court were painted in the same manner. Once every week a good housewife scrubs her mud floors with a solution of cowdung, a comforting process to those whose sense of smell is not oversensitive, as it is said to keep away snakes, and all sorts of noxious insects. The floor in our Badminton court was thus prepared, and thereby rendered dangerously slippery. M.'s verandah at Sattara was at one time polished with this mixture, but she preferred the possibility of snakes, and other annoying evils, to the nauseous odour it emitted whilst wet. It was not unusual to see the walls of houses, the neighbouring trees, or any open space covered over with this substance, made into thin circular

cakes, and set out in the sun to dry, to be used as fuel. In the month of October troops of girls passed along, balancing upon their heads great baskets, piled up with this commodity. When warped by the heat, it looks just like coarse oatcake. Cowdung is extensively used in certain Hindoo ceremonies, and in some they even bathe in it. The sanctity in which it is held by the people may no doubt be attributed to its real or supposed sanitary properties. A terrible future—in a hell of mosquitoes and gadflies—is reserved for anyone who neglects to burn, in a stable, cowdung or refuse, the smoke of which prevents the mosquitoes from injuring or annoying the cows.*

It often happened formerly that a person afflicted with a sore disease was encrusted with a shroud of cowdung, and burnt alive, thus undergoing a form of purification, which was

* "If you speak to Hindoos of eating the flesh of cows, they immediately raise their hands to their ears; yet milkmen, carmen, and farmers beat the cow as unmercifully as a carrier of coals beats his ass in England; and many starve them to death in the cold weather, rather than be at the expense of giving them food. Thus the cow is at once a beast of burden and a deity. Some of the poor think themselves happy if they can support a cow, as by kindness to this animal they expect reward in a future state. If a man sell a cow, the Shastras (a code of religious and moral laws)

supposed to ensure him better health in the next sphere of being. The small Indian cow gives but little milk, and is chiefly kept for such purposes as I have mentioned.

Every house had its little bit of garden, sometimes very small, a mere angle in a back yard, with a plantain, and a few pots containing herbs. Those which had larger spaces would grow in addition a guava-tree, or a pummalo, bearing, according to the season, highly-perfumed flowers, like stars of white wax, or great green globes suspended from a long green string. Stones red with vermilion, or greasy with libations of ghi, would be placed in the shade of such retreats, along with the more important family altar, if, for any reason, it proved inconvenient to set the latter in front of the dwelling. These altars are square pillars, with a scallop or shield at each corner, and are generally painted in

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threaten him with the torments of hell during as many thousand years as there are hairs on her body."

The frequent mention of cowdung may possibly sound unsavoury to English ears. If anyone is disposed to take offence at this, he should be reminded that at no very distant period it was employed medicinally in our own country. In a treatise upon cures, still extant, published in the year 1621, and dedicated to George, Duke of Buckingham, directions are given as to the proper way of rubbing wounds with this substance.

rich colours, the top being hollowed out, in order to contain a bush of the tooluse (basil), the sacred leaves of which are used in incantations, and to expel the poison of serpents. A branch of this plant is invariably placed at the head of the dying, in order to shorten their agony. The Hindoo legend respecting the tooluse plant runs as follows:—Toolüse, a female, was engaged for a long time in religious austerities, and at length asked this blessing of Vishnu, that she might become his wife. Lakshmi, Vishnu's wife, hearing this, cursed the woman, and changed her into a tooluse plant, but Vishnu promised that he would assume the form of the salagrama, and always keep near her. Therefore one leaf of the tooluse is continually kept above, and the other beside the salagrama stone.

The family walk round this altar, and bow before it, thus in their opinion performing a meritorious action. One tiny niche in these pillars is intended to contain a snake-stone, if it can be procured, another a salagrama stone, which is an object of veneration, mostly black, rounded, and perforated in one or more places by worms, or, as the Hindoos believe, by Vishnu, in the shape of a reptile. According to the number of perforations, and spiral curves in

each, the stone is supposed to contain more or less of Vishnu, in various characters. If these stones, which are in fact a kind of ammonite, are of a violet colour, they are kept only by the very courageous, for they are then supposed to be the bearers of a certain vindictive character. The salagrama stone must also be placed at the head of the dying; and no village is without one or more. The altars which were the receptacles of these precious articles looked most attractive when wreathed with garlands of flowers and lighted by numerous wicks, floating in shallow dishes of oil. Near one house there stood a smooth stone, with an oval top, on which was sculptured in high relief a hooded serpent, disposed in many coils, probably intended to represent Kalidamana, the familiar of Shiva and his queen. This was frequently picked out in red, the ground-work being white-washed.*

The Hindoos venerate snakes, in the form of which they believe many of their demi-gods to

* Smaller images are very common, and the idea of their medicinal virtue is very old in India. A Hindoo attacked by a fever, or other diseases, makes a serpent of brass or clay, and performs certain ceremonies in its honour, in furtherance of his recovery. Such ceremonies are thought to be most efficacious when the moon is in the sign called Sarpa, or the Serpent.

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have appeared. Although many thousands of people die every year of bites from these reptiles, they will not allow them to be destroyed.* The image of the cobra is propitiated with offerings of milk and clarified butter.

The principal Hindoo temple belonging to the prevailing Lyngate sect was, in its external appearance, like an ordinary house, only of larger dimensions. It had a lofty door, set in a finely-carved frame, surrounded by a broad band of red; and in many places the patterned woodwork was good. One occasionally obtained peeps into a long and lofty hall, with galleries, to which baths were probably attached. Standing by itself in an open space formed by the junction of three streets, stood another temple, which presented a primitive, not to say barbarous appearance. It was nothing but a box, painted in broad stripes of red and white, with a door, which was almost always closed. One day I did get a peep into its interior, and caught sight of a many-limbed black and gold idol. This edifice belonged to the Telugus, a very wild people, the supposed aborigines of

* "In 1869, 14,529 people died throughout India from the effects of snake-bite. The total deaths caused by snakes and wild animals in 1871 amounted to 18,078."—*The Prince's Guide-Book*, *p.* 15.

a large tract of country which stretches along to the most southerly part of the Madras coast. Around this building clustered a number of dwellings, all but hidden under the steep-pitched roofs, which were inhabited by sixty dancing girls, attached to the temple. The Telugus I therefore concluded to be followers of Vishnu. The sons of the prophet had a handsome mosque, with a large dome, a lofty minaret, and a tank, surrounded by tall trees. The town was furnished with two fine peepul-trees, surrounded by wide circular platforms, underneath which were sculptured stones, representing the goddess Shasti, painted yellow, riding upon a cat, and nursing a child. On the twenty-first day after child-bearing, the Hindoo women wash, perfume themselves, put on new raiment, and repair to the peepul-tree, where they worship this image and adorn it with fresh flowers. If circumstances do not admit of the performance of this ceremony out of doors, a branch of the tree is procured and adored at home. It is at all times considered a meritorious act to walk round the peepul-tree a certain number of times, counting the rosarial beads.*

* "The use of rosaries is adopted in India, perhaps in other countries of the East—Persia, for instance—by

A noble Indian fig shaded a tank, which was arranged so as to supply not only drinking water, but to fill large troughs for domestic purposes. To this tree the matrons repaired, in order to eat its "child-bearing berries," and to pray that its divine spirit might preserve them from the unhappy condition of widowhood.

I was much interested in watching the every-day occupations of the people; and there was ample scope for observation, as most of their employments were carried on out of doors. I never failed to look round for one woman, who was a capital shoemaker. With this exception

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Mahomedans as well as by Hindoos. With the Mahomedans the rosary seems to answer the same purpose as with the Hindoos. A bead is dropped through the finger and thumb at the contemplation or repetition of certain names and attributes of God, who, in the 'copious rhetoric of Arabia,' has as many appellations as in Sanskrit. It might be curious to investigate how the use of rosaries came to be adopted for the same purposes by people so distant and distinct as Christians, Hindoos, and Mahomedans. I do not recollect (but my recollection and research are too confined to hang the slightest weight of argument on) that they were used by Christians of the earlier ages, or by the Jews, anterior to Christ; and as there can be very little doubt of the high antiquity of their usage among Hindoos, it would, if the former supposition be well founded, follow that it is an implement borrowed into the Christian Church from the Pagan temples of the East."—MOOR'S *Hindoo Pantheon*, *p.* 16.

I never saw a female with a needle in her hand. Some were employed in cleaning cotton, which was pulled out very fine and exposed in shallow baskets to the sun, until it was as white and pure as sea-foam, to be used for quilting into counterpanes, coats, and pointed caps, with flaps—the helmet of old. Thus in times gone by might the great-grandmothers of the present race have been seen preparing the armour of the Máhratta warriors. Others wound bright-coloured silks, to be employed in striping and bordering the savis. It was pretty to watch the weaving of these garments, eight or nine yards long, the skilful management of which is quite an art. With these exceptions I should say that the fair sex were most busily employed in doing nothing, although they were most vivacious in the use of their tongue. But there were plenty of men sewing away at all sorts of garments, the most attractive being the vests and jackets of brilliant silks and satins which they were making up for the Parsis.

In every country the market should be the haunt of those who really wish to make themselves acquainted with the manners, customs, and resources of the people. The market of Belgaum was held once a week in the principal long winding street of the bazaar. I could

only pass through it and back again in a bullock-cart, but the driver was charged to go as slowly as possible. It was an animated scene, in which even the dreary Hindoo put aside his air of abstraction, and bought and sold with a keen eye to the pice which changed hands. The Mussulmans wrangled in making their bargains, but the Parsis managed, I was told, to make the best purchases. In some country that I have visited there is a saying that it would take five Arabs to overreach a Jew, but that it would take ten Jews to gain an advantage over an Armenian. I fancy that the Parsis of this country would be on a par with the Armenian. In the market, as is usual all the world over, the women displayed their treasured finery—in this instance their superabundance of silver and even gold ornaments, and freshest savis. Some of the girlish wives had head-dresses of yellow flowers, shaped like the Imperial crown; the flying butterflies sprang from a circle and were united in an ornament at the top. Well they suited the shiny black hair they were set upon. Flowers thus worn are afterwards presented to the gods. Another mode of dressing the head was to roll up the thick black tresses into a light loop, which was set about and fastened to the head

by large round buttons of embossed gold. The old women, who were not without coquetry, wore their worldly wealth upon their withered limbs, and had tastefully replaced the usual circular nose-ring, by pretty little gold jugs hooked into the nostril—ornaments exactly resembling some of the drops attached to brooches found in Etruscan tombs, and re-produced by Castellani. If they could have been attached to the under eye-lid instead, they would have made excellent tear-bottles. Some of them had in addition bristled the rims of their ears with little gold rings. The better order of children sported about gay as insects, shimmering in bits of gold and silver brocade and little peaked caps with spangles. In India all classes pet and make much of such tiny torments.

One day I passed from the markets into a large cattle fair, where I was struck with the exceeding quiet, the almost silence of the people. Such an assemblage amongst the Arabs would have been accompanied by a subdued roar, to be heard miles away. As the heat of the midday sun passed away, the silent streets became animated by a motley throng of people, bearing about them the characteristics of many countries and many races. The Hindoos

sat under their sacred trees, smoking a little tobacco, which they drew from the folds of their great turbans, that served them as pockets, and indulging in the evening gossip, which they dearly love. There also were restless Mahomedans, with their small red puggeries, and a sprinkling of Parsis, with their tall bulky forms and hideous oil-cloth caps, to whose sly, sensual, though somewhat handsome faces, I could never reconcile myself.

The day's duties over, the women chatted harshly in their verandahs. It was rare to see a pretty face or a pleasant countenance, so many looking, in spite of their dark hue, puffy and pallid. It was only occasionally that one caught sight of a young girl with regular features, a soft brown skin, and beseeching eyes, for almost without exception the native women have splendid eyes—perhaps a little too glittering and hard. Those in their prime could boast of fine teeth, a rich abundance of black hair, shiny with oil, a beautiful form, tall, well developed figures, and limbs finely modelled. The savi is well calculated to adorn. The native women, however, wither unfortunately as soon as their early bloom has passed away, and rarely attain middle age. One reason for this premature decay is the pernicious

habit which obtains among them of nursing two or three babies at the same time; and if one of these chances to be a boy, the girls are nearly starved, in order that he may flourish and grow strong. If the women pass the period of middle life, they live to extreme old age, and present the most witch-like appearance which it is possible to conceive. They would sometimes pass an evening hour in playing at certain games, the most popular apparently being chess, and one called tamil, in which differently coloured pieces of stick are thrown down at random, and the numbers counted with pegs upon a gaily painted board.

Amongst the street pictures which amused me was the sight of two dames—wives, by the bright scarlet lines which adorned their foreheads—who, looking very like one of their own squatting divinities, sat with their legs folded, playing with absorbed attention at chess. Many Oriental scholars believe that chess originated in India. The pieces in the Indian game are the same in number as in Europe, but they are differently named, being called the king, his minister, two elephants, two horns, two boats, and eight soldiers. Another indoor pastime is the bandolier, which is here made of metal. I believe that this game is extinct in England;

but some people may remember the grooved wooden wheel which a skilful player obliged to travel unceasingly up and down a smooth string. The bandolier was a favourite plaything with the late Duke of Wellington, who introduced it into Europe after his Indian campaign. Games with cards are also played, but not in public by females. Whilst their mothers amused themselves, the children wallowed in mud or dust, according to the season.

Some of the very little ones were models of infantine beauty; but they soon lost their early charm, and grew into ugly wild creatures, with bodies so puffed out that they looked as if they had swallowed whole pumpkins. During the rains the infants wore pointed hoods of red cotton quilted, and little jackets just passing the shoulder blades, plenty of silver anklets, waist-chains, and bracelets, besides necklaces, with boxes to contain charms—a droll costume, in which they looked like so many Pucks. The older boys wore round the hips a dirty piece of twine, the sacred cord, the first placing of which is a religious rite, as necessary and as sacred as baptism is with us, securing the child his second birth, and making him a member of his father's religion and caste. In the Brahman caste the ceremony, which takes place when the child is

six years old, is performed by the family priest, who fastens a piece of cloth round the child's middle, and ties the cord diagonally across the body, and over the right shoulder, whilst a mystic Sanskrit verse is pronounced by the father—a verse which all Brahmans know, but none may declare. The sad day when little boys must first go to school is indicated by the stars, as interpreted by their servants the astrologers. This, however, perhaps may not be quite so unpleasant an event as in Europe, for many of the native schools are open to the street, and the small boys, all turbans and slates, though placed with their backs to the public, can steal a glance from their flashing eyes at anything amusing that may occur in the thoroughfare. How different from the fate of our urchins at home, who have nothing to gaze at but a dreary expanse of whitewash, broken here and there by a fly-spotted text or an old yellow map!

On the whole, judging by what I saw of them, the Hindoos appear to be a cheerful and contented people.

CHAPTER VI.

Family Laws of the Hindoos—Wives and Widows—Mendicants—Gosaees—Pilgrims—Fakirs—The Original Juggernath—Shiva, God of the Mendicants—His Disciples—Anomaly in the Hindoo Character—Maintenance of the Priests—Bridegrooms and their Best Men—A Hindoo Wedding—Matrimonial Processions in the Marrying Month—Rams for Combat—Profusion of Flowers in India—Domestic Scenes—Intelligence of Monkeys.

THE family laws of the Hindoos are very primitive, and that they can be carried out in this age is a proof of their naturally good and gentle natures. Whatever the gains of its different members may be, they are given up to swell one common fund, which is divided according to rule, and thus are the sick and the aged supported. The "house-mother" is omnipotent, ruling with a rod of iron her sons, their betrothed, and their wives, and, moreover, having great influence over her husband. She may not, however, eat out of his dish, except

upon the marriage-day, or drink from his cup; and as the ties of a husband to his wife can be superseded, they are never so strong as those which bind a son to his mother. One of the duties which devolve upon a wife is that of shampooing her husband when fatigued—an art in which all native women are skilled.

When the wife becomes a widow, unless she is blessed with a son, a great change takes place in her position. Her iron sceptre passes away, her ornaments are removed, the long tresses of which she is proud are shorn, she is allowed but one meal in the twenty-four hours, and when she steals abroad no gay bordering enlivens the white garment, which so completely shrouds her that she looks like a ghost who has wandered into the sunshine by mistake.*

* From a case lately reported in the *Times* of India, it appears as if even the Parsis had imbibed some of the Hindoo notions as to caste. That the Mahomedans have done so, is without doubt. A Parsi was condemned to die. He submitted quietly to be pinioned, and made but one request, which was—that he should not be put to death by a Mhar (a very low caste man). He walked with a firm step towards the drop, where the executioner quietly placed the cap before his face—but not before the Parsi had seen that he was a Mhar, which so enraged the condemned man that, as soon as he felt the rope about his neck, he kicked his executioner. It was his last act in this world—a striking evidence of the ruling passion strong in death.

Although the Hindoo population in Belgaum greatly preponderate, there are numbers of Mahomedans with lithe forms and keen eyes, a sprinkling of bulky Parsis, and numbers of half European Portuguese. It seems strange that this people, with their fine intelligent faces, should be so much darker than the middle caste Hindoos. Perhaps it may be accounted for by the frequent marriages they contract with native women of a low class. Strangers also were to be seen. Sometimes an exceptionally tall man, with full blue loose trousers, drapery streaming from his head, and long strings of brown beads dangling from his belt, a traveller from Sind or Guzerat, would stride along with an air far more stately than that of the Máhratta. On the eve of festivals ascetics would flock in—hideous walking skeletons, whose persons exhibited no signs of the beauty of holiness, and who unwillingly submitted to wear the slight covering strictly exacted by Government. It always excited my anger to see their greasy necks wreathed with strings of pure and lovely flowers.

Even a worse class of holy men are the Gosaees—men with powerful, well-nourished frames, made hideous by art, carrying great

clubs in their hands, and looking most ferocious. Some of them were streaked with dirt and lime, others were tinged a livid blue from the funeral ashes with which they were powdered, made to adhere by a size of rice-water. This sect of religionists was formerly very numerous in Máhratta. They are engaged in trade, and not only celebrate the rite of marriage, but exercise the power of divorce. They led infamous lives, and enjoyed a horrid pre-eminence in self-inflicted torture, a sort of discipline which rendered them formidable adversaries in the religious wars with which great part of their time was occupied. Some of their terrible tortures they endured, not in order to wipe away the stain of crime, but for the purpose of extorting money from the feeble-minded. In the invention of tortures, they showed a fertility of depraved imagination which is almost incredible. What sort of mind could the man have possessed who invented the mustard-seed torture? The devotee, taking a handful of moist earth, and placing it on his under-lip, planted in it some mustard-seed, with which he exposed himself to the heat of day and the dews of night, until the seed quickened, all the time lying in a fixed and motionless position,

until the grains sprouted, which was generally about the fourth day.*

Another of their devices, which has been put down with a high hand, was their mode of levying black mail by sitting down upon the doorstep of some well-to-do person, and demanding a certain sum of money before they would move. If this was not granted, the holy man would wound himself, and allow the blood to flow upon the threshold, the consequence of which was ruin to the family, as it rendered the whole of them unclean, put them out of their caste, and reduced them to the condition of pariahs, until, whatever distance they might have to traverse, they made a pilgrimage to the banks of the holy Ganges, and bathed in its purifying waters.

Other horrid spectacles were presented by certain persons, generally boys or very young men, who had distorted their limbs in order to excite compassion. We used frequently to encounter one of these beings, who ran along upon all fours with the facility of a monkey, his back-bone apparently quite at ease in a

* Peas, thrust up the nostril by mischievous children, have been known to germinate.

horizontal position. He came one day into the fort, and seeing the soldiers' wives give him some small bits of money, I thought that I would go and do the same, but when I got quite near, and saw the horrible expression in the somewhat handsome face, I was so disgusted that I pocketed my piece and hurried away.

The pilgrims from beyond the sea were pleasanter objects of contemplation, with their long flowing beards, silvery white, or coloured, according to their order. They wore frocks, carried stout staves, which they looked capable of using if necessary, and had long rosaries of black beads, flecked with silver. Blue eyes sometimes shone out of their sunburnt faces, and they looked a jolly race, such as we picture to ourselves the monks of old.

Then there were the Fakirs, with plaited petticoats, and fans in their hands, many of whom were the emissaries whom Juggernath sends forth to visit every town and village in India, to draw money from the pockets of the poor, and recruit those dismal armies which perish by thousands on their way to the shrine of this monstrous idol. Willing to change their condition at any price, the unfortunate widow class are often beguiled to make this pilgrimage,

of which their friends have to pay the cost, by doing which they expect to get rid of them.*

A poor man might be seen going from house to house, having in his hand a basket, in which there was nothing to be seen but a greasy black

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* The original Juggernath is supposed to have been a splinter of the blue stone of Orissa, set up in the deep jungle, and worshipped by the aborigines, but he makes his first appearance in history in the year 318, a wooden figure with stumps for limbs. In the body the bones of Krishna are said to be embedded. He has passed through many changes, at one time falling into the hands of the Mussulmans, then, by right of conquest, the Máhrattas obtaining possession of him, and a very lucrative possession he was. Upon the arrival of the English, without a blow being struck, his person, his temples, and his great riches in jewels, and lands, and monasteries, were given over to their care, and the Company bound themselves to uphold all his rights and privileges as they found them, but the supervision of the idolatrous rites practised, and the income which accrued to the Government, placed them in such an awkward position, that in the year 1840 the Company removed this stain upon its administration, and handed their entire authority over to the Rajahs of Kurdha. Juggernath, I may add, is not the cruel god whom many suppose him to be. He accepts no bloody sacrifice. He delights in pleasant sights and good cheer. A complete history of the legends relating to him, of his establishment, his ninety cooks, his troops of dancing-girls recruited by the priests from the flower of the 300,000 unhappy beings who annually worship at his shrine, will be found in Mr. W. W. HUNTER'S "History of Orissa."

stone, twined round with jessamine flowers, which was supposed to represent Shiva, the King of the Mendicants. His disciple never failed to collect handfuls of rice, bits of boiled pulse, or a handful of curds, giving in return a flower, which had been bestowed upon the god. Such gifts are considered good works, likely to exercise a favourable influence on the condition of the bestower in the next birth. The Hindoo never gives anything from a real feeling of benevolence. He is ordered by his shastras to give water (which he may perhaps have had to fetch from a distant well) to the wearied traveller, on the days of a certain month, and he gives it, but that month passed, the wayfarer may perish from want before he gets one drop to which no reward is attached. The Hindoo is a strange creature; having little feeling on account of his own sufferings, he has still less sympathy with those of others.

A cross-legged divinity, under a glittering canopy, was occasionally borne past, with rice and fruits at his feet, when the pious, attracted by the monotonous sing-song of the attendant priest, would come forth and present to the god offerings sufficient to maintain the priest for days. Many of them live entirely upon the food thus collected.

A pleasanter sight to see was the bridegroom, who at certain periods of the year sat under his verandah, receiving the congratulations of his friends. His turban, more than usually large on this occasion, was covered with flowers, which were also plentifully distributed over his person. Silver ornaments and tinselled finery glittered in his garments, while on his face were marks of vermilion and gilding. Not less droll was the appearance of the best man, who was obliged to stand upright in an immovable position, for fear of overbalancing the enormous ornaments which he had to support upon his head. The tiers of looking-glass which he carried looked like the stepped roof of some Jaina temple.

One night we saw a very pretty wedding. The bridegroom was in his garden, squatting in the centre of a large ring formed of sugar-canes placed crosswise. At each angle lights glimmered, illuminating the fresh green of the leaves. Sometimes in the marrying months we encountered in the afternoon processions, in which the big boy bridegroom, seated on a horse, and huddled up in an old garment of light red wool, bore his tiny black bride before him, decked out with silver, but innocent of clothes. The torch-light cavalcades were more imposing. Once we cut through a crowd where three

husbands abreast, and alone, their baby wives being asleep, preceded men who were carrying long altars, or tables, covered with gold tissue, with pots of artificial flowers upon them. I saw no reason for believing that the marriages of infant girls were going out of fashion. There is no such thing as change of customs or fashions in the East; what such ceremonies were a thousand years ago, such are they now. Sometimes the sound of wild music attracted one to a different scene, where women, clad in their best, were peeping from behind a scanty curtain of white cotton; and one could perceive the pallid feet of a dead man protruding from his couch of kuhsa grass.

Not the least among the many picturesque objects were the rams which were led along; their great curled horns stained red, their bodies covered with trappings of crimson velvet and gold, and their necks encircled by wreaths of flowers, the national luxury of India, which form a part of every ceremony, religious or civil, and which even robs death of its horrors. These animals so forcibly reminded me of those depicted upon the old Roman sarcophagi that I at once jumped to the conclusion that they were about to be sacrificed. Such, however, was not the case; they were on their way to make

sport for the cruel Máhrattas, at one of those combats of beasts to which they are so partial. I have been told that these creatures rush at one another so forcibly, and strike their foreheads together with such violence, that the sound of the shock can be heard at a considerable distance.

From G——'s high carriage we were enabled to peep down into the little gardens, and sometimes saw people feasting. These outdoor assemblies were confined to women and children, who appeared to enjoy themselves greatly, being squatted in long rows, facing one another, clad in clean savis, with flowers in their hair, and a profusion of silver ornaments, brightened up for the occasion. Each fair one had a shining brass lootah by her side, and before her a plate, cut from some cool green leaf (the patrowlee, prepared by the goorow). I found, upon inquiry, that upon such occasions the company were regaled with rice, curry made of various vegetables, boiled pulse, fish cooked with tamarinds, curds, ghi, sour milk, and pungent concoctions of the betel-nut, the cardamum, and other aromatic seeds. I never wearied of observing these shifting scenes, these street pictures, and the everyday habits of this curious

people. Alas! the interior of their habitations was to me forbidden ground.

There was one very large house in Belgaum—a rambling place, with covered courts, in one of which there was a tank, and a fountain which had ceased to play. It was altogether an ugly pile, of three stories, with here and there a bit of good carving round the windows, and on the jutting beams. It was built by a rich merchant, but had been closed since his death, in consequence of its having fallen into some Chancery-like abyss of Hindoo law, having become the property of seven sons by different mothers. Solomon would quickly have arranged matters by chopping the property up into seven portions; but, alas! there are in India few Solomons—not one to decide upon the merits of this case. In consequence of which, this dreary palace is gradually tumbling down, and probably the result to the claimants is a large annual bill for repairs. It is still sometimes made waterproof by a vast irregular roofing of tiles, and upon which, during each returning monsoon, a colony of monkeys establish themselves—large fellows, with black bodies, long tails, and white-haired faces, whom we often observed employing their leisure hours in stacking the tiles up in heaps.

One day G—— saw them come quickly down and loot a bunian shop during the midday slumber of its owner. Filling their cheeks in a moment, and regaining their own domain, they gave a share of the spoil to the sentinel, who had been posted in order to give the alarm in case of danger. What a strange problem is the monkey mind! Being sacred, these animals are, of course, never molested. Their exploits recalled to my mind an engraving, which many may remember, in Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, copied from a tomb at Thebes, and representing a band of monkeys who had been trained to gather fruit. Perched upon the branches of a tree, those in front are handing down the harvest to the gardeners with the utmost propriety of demeanour; but, alas for monkey morality! those not under the eye of the master are stuffing their cheeks with the forbidden fruit. *Apropos* of this print, Wilkinson goes on to relate how, in the Jemma country, south of Abyssinia, monkeys are still taught useful accomplishments, among them that of officiating as torch-bearers at supper-parties, where, seated in rows on a bench, they hold lights until the departure of the guests, and patiently await their own repast as a reward for their services. Sometimes, how-

ever, a refractory subject fails in his accustomed duty, and the harmony of the party is disturbed, particularly if an unruly monkey throws his lighted torch into the midst of the unsuspicious guests. The following story is told by Mr. Ward,* as falling within his own experience:—

"About twenty years ago the Rajah of Nudieza spent a hundred thousand rupees in marrying two monkeys, when all the parade common at Hindoo marriages was exhibited. In the marriage procession were seen elephants, camels, horses richly caparisoned, palanquins, lamps, and flambeaus. The male monkey, fastened in a fine palanquin, had a crown on his head, and men were standing by his side to fan him. Then followed singing and dancing-girls in carriages, besides which there was every kind of Hindoo music, and a good display of fireworks, &c. Dancing, music, singing, and every kind of low mirth were exhibited at the bridegroom's palace for twelve days together. During the marriage ceremony learned Brahmans were employed in reading the formulas from the Shastras. At the time this matrimonial union took place, no monkeys of the sort were to be seen about Nudieza; now they

* WARD'S *View, &c., of the Hindoos.*

are so numerous that they devour almost all the fruit of the orchards; for they are unmolested, the inhabitants being afraid of hurting them."

CHAPTER VII.

Cemeteries for Europeans—Hindoo Place of Interment—Ceremony of Cremation—Erection of a Funeral Pyre—Sanskrit Verses Recited—Disposal of the Dead—Scripture Authority for Cremation—Comparison of Greek and Hindoo Funeral Ceremonies—Superstitions of the Hindoos—The Influence of the Moon—Belief in Spirits—Widowhood in the Higher Orders—Suicide of a Young Widow—Distinction of Caste—Case of Suttee.

THERE are two European cemeteries belonging to Belgaum. The new one is as yet sparsely inhabited, nor is the other by any means full. The former is disused in consequence of its proximity to the town. It might easily be made pretty, for it is shaded with fine trees of delicate foliage, in addition to which there is a splendid avenue of the poinsettia. When I visited the place this shrub was in flower, forming a long double line of vivid crimson. The cemetery was not altogether neglected, but such a collection of hideous monuments was

surely never before seen together. The size of the tombs appeared to be in an inverse ratio to the importance of the persons commemorated by the inscriptions. One oppressively large pyramid was erected over the body of a ten months baby. There were arches, sarcophagi, and funeral urns as big as the jars used by the forty thieves. Perhaps the materials employed—brick and chuman—might in some measure affect the designs. Most of the marble or stone flags on which the inscriptions had been cut were gone, having been stolen by the natives to grind their curry upon. On the occasion of my visit I was followed at a distance by a black-faced, white-robed guardian, who did a little cleaning up whilst he dogged my steps.

The Hindoo place of interment and cremation was situated in a tract of undulating scrub on the confines of a wild wood, which unwillingly gave place to a bleak moor. Numerous stepped tombs, many of them worn by time, were irregularly scattered about; others, to all appearance modern, were made of brick and chuman, and decorated by lines and scrolls painted in pale colours. Occasionally such memorials as these were to be seen clustered together, prettily adorned with odoriferous shrubs and sweet-smelling flowers, and enclosed by a high prickly

hedge. These I took to be family burial-places, belonging to the Lyngate sect. Dark circles, where no grass grew, pointed out where the ceremony of cremation had lately taken place. It was by no means an unpleasant spot to wander over. When driving alone, I was sometimes tempted to leave the carriage, and, under cover of the darkness, steal near to some mass of glowing fire, and watch with awe the one long black central line which told its melancholy tale.

A dying Hindoo is placed upon a mat of the sacred kuhsa grass, and, if possible, his head is sprinkled with water from the holy Ganges, probably bought long ago from some pilgrim, and stored for the occasion. Basil leaves are thrown upon him, and a salagrama stone placed near. When life is extinct, the corpse must be washed, perfumed, wrapped in new white cotton, sweet jessamine blossoms put into the mouth, and the body wreathed with fresh flowers. During these operations verses from the Vedas are chanted. Sacred fire is then kindled in an earthen vessel, and placed at the feet of the dead man. The relatives go forth to bid the friends of the deceased to the funeral procession —an invitation which is not neglected, for it is considered meritorious to follow a bier. They

provide themselves with wood, amongst which, if the family can afford it, are a few branches of the sandal-tree—also resin and oil, coarse ghi and flax, and with these they proceed to build the funeral pyre. Four holes are dug, in each of which a stout post is fixed. The space thus marked is filled with the materials in such a way as to form a compact mass; high as the shoulder of a man for one of the male sex, but only breast high should the body be that of a woman. At each stage of these proceedings such verses in Sanskrit as the following are recited:—"Foolish is he who seeks for permanance in the human state, unsolid like the stem of the plantain-tree, transient like the foam of the sea. When a body formed of five elements, to receive the reward of deeds done in its own former person, reverts to its original principles, what room is there for regret? The earth is perishable, the ocean, the gods themselves pass away, how should not that bubble man meet destruction! All that is low must finally perish, all that is elevated must ultimately fall, all compound bodies must end in dissolution, and life be concluded in death."

An endless number of sentences like these are uttered by the priest. Then all who are

present to act as mourners, carefully wash and anoint themselves. The nearest male relative, carrying the funeral fire before the bier, heads the procession.

Arrived at the spot where the last portion of the ceremony is to be accomplished, the body is tenderly laid upon the pile, and the chief mourner lights his torch at the consecrated fire, with averted face and inward prayer. The head of the corpse is the last part which yields to the intense heat, the flesh being generally consumed before the head bursts with a loud report, the signal that the ceremony is over. The relations and friends then usually withdraw, leaving priests or hirelings to watch the cooling embers, and the last portions of the remains that are reduced to ashes. It often happens that the charred bones are not collected until the following morning, but it is a great sin if the body of a Hindoo be not entirely disposed of within four-and-twenty hours after death. When the ashes are collected, they are, if possible, committed to some flowing stream with prayers. If that cannot be done, they are interred upon the spot, which must in either case be carefully smoothed and swept.

In large towns the cost of fuel for cremation

is a heavy tax upon the poor. I have seen complaints on this subject in the official reports handed in by the health officer in Bombay, who states that on more than one occasion bodies were not completely consumed, the relations having brought too scanty a supply of fire-wood. "I much recommend," he says, "that a cinerator be erected at this burning ghât"—a certain platform near the sea in Bombay—"which should be at the service of the poor, on the payment of a small fee. A body would be put in at one end of a closed vessel, which in its transit through the cinerator would be exposed to such intense heat that, when drawn out and opened, after a certain time, the ashes alone of the deceased would be found remaining to be carried away and disposed of. History, we know, repeats itself, and I am strongly of opinion that this most cleanly method of disposing of the dead will be again revived in Europe as the increased population force the living to encroach on the resting-places of the dead."

Long before questions such as these were discussed in England, I had made up my mind that I should greatly wish my body after death to be disposed of in some such manner. To my mind it appears a sin against the flesh to

box it up in corruption. I feel convinced that with many people the dread of death is intimately connected with the horrors of the grave, and I hope to see the day when leaden coffins, horses with nodding plumes, black coaches, and red-nosed mutes, will be numbered among other abolished mistakes of the past. That we have Scripture authority for cremation is evident in the mention made of Jehoram: "So he died of sore diseases, and his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers."

This verse also bears curiously upon another Hindoo custom. The Hindoos do not burn the bodies of such as die of leprosy or other loathsome diseases, of those who commit suicide, who are killed by violence, or have died in consequence of the bites of snakes. Among this people such deaths are supposed to be visitations from the gods as a punishment for crimes committed in the last or of some former state of existence. The corpses of such are treated with scant ceremony, being cast into the water, thrown into the jungle, or exposed on the hill-tops, where they are quickly devoured by the rapacious animals. Women who die in childbirth, and infants under two years of age, are buried with religious rites. The bodies of ascetics are either put into a chest, or, being tied

to a couple of earthen pots, are sunk in water.*

* It is curious to compare the funeral ceremonies of the Hindoos with those which obtained among the Greeks. The history of the funereal plants of the ancients has been worked out in a very interesting way by G. A. Langguth. He describes the employment of them from the commencement of the malady to the close of the funeral ceremonies. When any malady began to excite serious alarm in the friends of a sufferer, they suspended at his door boughs of the favourite tree of Apollo, the god of medicine, in order to secure a favourable turn to the complaint. To the branches of laurel were added tufts of the rhamnus, consecrated to Janus, and which was supposed to secure the dwelling from all harm. But if, despite of these ceremonies, death overtook the sick person, they substituted for these plants black boughs of cypress, the emblem of Pluto and Proserpine, or branches of larch—the funeral tree, as Pliny calls it. At a later period, when the body of the deceased had been washed, it was anointed with perfumes—myrrh, frankincense, canella, and cardamum—and was then deposited in a coffin of cypress-wood, which the Athenians, as Thucydides tells us, considered to be incorruptible. On the head was placed a wreath of flowers, formed of olive, laurel, white poplar, lilies, and smallage, emblematic of the condition of the departed. Burning branches of pine and stems of papyrus lighted the procession, which advanced to the sound of funereal flutes, in the construction of which only boxwood and lotus were employed. The body was finally consumed on a pyre of resinous wood, the action of which was rapid, and whose odorous emanations absorbed the smell of burned flesh. The relatives piously collected the ashes, placed them in urns mixed with perfumes of myrtle and rose, frankincense and violet, after which they were deposited in the tomb."—*The Universe*, by F. A. POUCHET, M.D.

I took some pains to acquaint myself with the everyday superstitions of the Hindoos, which are nearly all mixed up with their religious notions, or their notions respecting astrology and alchymy. They believe in the influence of the moon, as absolutely as old Moore, of almanac memory, or any who pin their faith to his theories. This, however, can scarcely be fairly called a superstition, for I believe that it is an ascertained fact that the condition of the moon does, in tropical climates, influence the course of fevers and some other maladies—at least, this was the opinion of a learned Bombay physician, now deceased. He wrote, "The influence of the moon has been observed in this part of India by every medical practitioner; it is universally acknowledged by the doctors of all classes, of all castes, and of all countries. The people are taught to believe it in their infancy, and as they grow up they acknowledge it from experience." They have some odd notions respecting cats—they assert, for instance, that after having kittened, the mother will always change her bed seven times. In order to verify this statement, a friend of ours watched the cat under these circumstances, and certainly six times in succession did she tug her progeny from place to place,

but alas! there was no seventh, for poor pussy stole a chicken and came to woe!

With regard to the same animal, some strange facts were brought to light during a trial in which we took some interest. A fine black cat, a pet, belonging to one of our neighbours in the fort, had been knocked off a tree in his compound and cruelly beaten to death by a man who was passing with a bamboo in his hand. It came out in evidence that the Máhrattas are fond of eating black cats. Full of this story, I related it to our English nurse, who, turning round to the ayah, said,

"Surely the Máhrattas do not eat cats?"

"Yes, yes," was the reply; "eat white cat, but black cat best."

"Is it possible," exclaimed the European, "that you have ever eaten cat?"

"Me!—no, no," said the old lady, licking her lips; "but black cat *very* good."

Other Hindoos would die rather than eat cat, and the fact of its being done by the Máhrattas, goes to confirm the notion that they are a people who have never been subdued by conquest.*

* According to Frank Buckland, the animal is esteemed a delicacy in a certain part of Europe. He tells us that in the mountains near Pampeluna processions of sportsmen

The Hindoos share with many races the belief in the efficacy of the blood of a black cat as a medicine. The people have an exceeding dread of malignant spirits—in fact, they have no idea of any that are beneficent. The first lamp lighted in the evening is carried all over the house, in order to chase away the imps of darkness who may be in it. Were you to rap only once at the door of any house during the silent hours of night, a muttered Sanskrit line would be the sole response, for the malicious demons do this in order to induce people to come forth and throw themselves into tanks and wells; but if you rap three times the door will open at once, for that is a mystic number, that cannot be used by any beings of malignant origin.

That there are demons who live in the earth and guard treasure is another of their notions, but they have no idea of the re-appearance of

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start in state for the woods, where the beaters beat for cats, which are shot when in the trees. At the end of the day the cats are hung up in a cart covered with garlands, and a triumphal entry is made into the town. A dinner then takes place, at which the mayor presides, where the delicacy is served up, prepared in various manners, though cat is not considered to make a good roast. In the same neighbourhood the market price of a hare is three francs, but a wild cat, fit for the table, fetches seven.

one of themselves after death, which is incompatible with their mode of disposing of the dead. They, however, do believe in the spirits of a few English officers whose great deeds live in story, but they entertain no horror of such ghosts.

One of our friends nearly met with an accident in returning home from our house at night. He was driving a spirited horse, which was much frightened at suddenly coming upon an earthen dish full of glowing incense, afterwards ascertained to have been placed there by some one ill of fever in an adjoining house, under the idea that the malady would quit his body and enter that of the first person who passed the fire.

I have referred to the unhappy condition of women of the lower orders who have lost their husbands, but the state of widowhood is still more distressing in a superior rank of life. It is especially so in the case of a young creature who, though by law a wife, has not yet emerged from under the wing of her mother-in-law. Her state is indeed deplorable. She loses at one fell stroke all that a Hindoo girl has been taught to believe worth living for. Her greatest joy was to look forward to the affection of a husband, and the delight of becoming a mother.

With this departed shadow of a union even her position among women is gone. The black tresses she is so proud of are shorn off, her ornaments she cannot wear, and her soft robes are exchanged for those of a colourless and coarse description. This is misery indeed, and it is often aggravated by the insults she receives from the strange family, who now look upon her as a burden. Who can wonder that many a young creature so situated formerly sought the pangs of suttee-ism, and have now recourse to suicide? I was greatly impressed by a case of this sort which lately took place at Calcutta. It appeared in the *Indian Daily News*.

"Mr. Egerton Allen," it says, "Deputy Coroner, held an inquiry lately into the circumstances attending the death of a young native widow, who was reported to have destroyed her life by means of opium, because she could no longer endure a state of perpetual widowhood.

"The facts of this case, chiefly gleaned from two letters written by the unfortunate deceased, will give an idea of the miserable life which a Hindoo widow leads, and loudly call for a reformation in this direction. . . . .

"The letters found were then translated and read. They ran as follows:—

"'I, Sreemutte Koosum Koomaree, possessing two Government promissory notes of five hundred rupees each, do bequeath them to my sister Kuddum. She can do what she likes with them. I have sold all my jewels, and bought these papers. I give her these of my own free will; and all my other possessions, house included, to my mother. I have some ornaments mortgaged for one hundred and forty rupees. What shall I say to other people? Where my mind is there I am going." (The deceased here expresses deep grief for the loss of her husband.) "What is the use of my living? It is not my intention to go astray, and what is the use of my life? The Hindoo religion is very bad in allowing early marriages. . . . Mother, I leave thee in sorrow. Forgive all my misgivings. I am going long before my time. . . . Let no one grieve for me, I am fated to die. It is no one's fault. Mother, on account of me no one liked you, but now everyone will worship you. My aunt, who took care of me, is worth her weight in gold—take care of her." (Here she earnestly prays to God to pardon her sins.) "I, who have taken poison, am in a bad state of mind. There is no grief greater than that of a Hindoo widow. I was only fourteen years and five months when I was

married, and am now only eighteen. I see no reason for suffering distress longer. Why has God made me a woman, and why should I suffer so much? On account of shame which may hereafter befall me I am giving up my life. I have not known happiness for a single day since my marriage, and I am therefore giving up my life. I have bought opium through the hands of the little children, one and two pice worth at a time, and have accumulated one rupee and five pice worth, which I have taken.'

"The jury returned a verdict of suicide by means of opium."

This poor heathen creature was so miserable that she was induced to commit what she knew to be a crime. In former days she would have sought refuge in sutteeism, and have mounted her funeral pile under the conviction that she was about to pass into a state of bliss.

Although aware that caste distinctions had been permitted in the Syrian and Romish churches from the beginning, and that the Dutch had allowed its usages unrestrained observance, I was much surprised to find that the cruel Hindoo law, which bars the re-marriage of a child-widow, was allowed to remain amongst the native Protestant Christians until as late as the year 1849. There is extant a

letter of Bishop Heber's, in which he makes certain inquiries respecting the question of caste, and the answers he received were such as to induce this good man to believe that caste might exist divested of all connection with idolatry, and reduced to a civil distinction in the community. He was led to coincide in the opinion of several learned men, who had come to the conclusion that castes existed distinct from one another long before the Brahmans came to the country, and that the Brahmans only blended it with their idolatry, and further, that heathens who embraced Christianity returned back, in point of caste, from error to original truth. "They make caste what it had been before, a civil distinction . . . Then, too, such of the heathens as become Christians, and renounce everything connected with the superstition and idolatry of the Brahmanical system, can of necessity retain nothing in the distinctions of caste but what is merely of a civil nature."

The good bishop and his friends do not seem to have reflected sufficiently upon the weakness inherent in human nature, and accordingly, under Heber and two succeeding bishops, a certain, or, more correctly speaking, an uncertain latitude was allowed in the Protestant

community with regard to caste. Bishop Wilson, however, formed an opinion perfectly opposite to that of his predecessors. He writes, in a circular addressed to the Tanjore mission, "The distinctions of caste must be abandoned, decidedly, immediately, and finally." This expression of opinion was received by the native Christians with great displeasure, and they showed how strongly they were opposed to the bishop's views by seceding in a body. The next prelate, Bishop Spencer, was more cautious, but he announced his determination not to admit to orders anyone who refused to associate in the ordinary rites of hospitality with the Christian brotherhood. During his administration, a commission was appointed to inquire into the state of feeling with respect to caste in the Christian congregations, and they issued an able report, divided into heads. In their eleventh article they expressed themselves as follows respecting young Christian widows :—

"In conclusion, we desire to record our deep concern at the lamentable fate of young Christian widows. We fear this is in some degree connected—indirectly, perhaps—with caste prejudices. Left in utter desolation, without protectors or advisers, frequently at an age which we should deem that of simplest childhood, they

are allowed to grow up in a humiliating sense of degradation. Debarred by the criminal customs of their people from all hope of honourable marriage, and without adequate restraints of a moral or religious nature, they too often become unhappy victims of the irregular indulgence of passion. Even if innocent of this, they are scarcely free from the imputation of guilt, and under the most favourable circumstances, they are in danger of becoming objects of suspicion, contempt, and obloquy. Any immediate remedy for this evil seems scarcely to be hoped for, but we do entertain a strong trust that the total abolition of caste might in time favourably affect the unhappy prejudices of the native converts on this important subject."

This document is dated February, 1848. So far as the authority of the bishops of the Episcopal church in India, and the general expression of opinion on the part of its ministers, are concerned, the question of caste may now be regarded as settled.

The documents I have referred to, along with a good deal of interesting matter on the same subject, are to be found in the appendix to a useful little work, which I have more than once referred to, "The Land of the Vedas," a course of lectures delivered at St. Augustine's Mission-

ary College, Canterbury, by the Reverend Peter Percival.

Shortly after my arrival in Belgaum, there occurred in the Bengal Presidency a case of suttee, which was much discussed. The custom was declared by the Indian Government to be illegal in the year 1829, but cases still crop up occasionally in remote districts. In this case the sacrifice was accomplished before the authorities had time to prevent it. A woman, bound with cords to the body of her deceased husband, was laid upon the funeral pile. In a high state of excitement, elated by finding herself the heroine of the hour, and probably drugged, she willingly submitted during the preparatory proceedings, but when she was brought face to face with the terrible end, when the hand of her nearest male relative had kindled the pile, she uttered fearful screams, and attempted to set herself free. All her prayers and efforts were of no avail, she was thrust back by sticks, and loud barbaric music was sounded to drown her cries. To hasten the unhappy woman's end, a greater quantity of ghi (butter), gum, and oil, was thrown upon the kindling wood, and after a terrible scene life was extinct, and her body was quickly reduced to ashes. The chief actors in this horrible affair were afterwards

arrested, but I did not hear to what punishment they were condemned." There is no doubt that this revolting custom was a comparatively late invention of the Brahmans, although they claim for it the authority of perhaps the most ancient existing code of laws given in the Rig-Veda, which they ascribe to inspiration. The wonderful advance made of late years in the study of Sanskrit enables the learned to show that none of its authoritative books contain any such law.*

* The subject is so curious that I must be pardoned for the length of the following quotation from a lecture given by one of the most learned Sanskrit scholars of the day, who says, "There is to be found in the earliest book of the Vedas a compound word (vi-dhava), which signifies husbandless, widow; and it is justly remarked, if the custom of widow-burning had existed at that early period, there would have been no vi-dhavas, or husbandless women, because they would all have followed their husbands into death. Therefore the very name indicates, what we are farther enabled to prove by historical evidence, the late origin of widow-burning in India. It is true that when the English Government prohibited this melancholy custom, and when the whole of India seemed on the verge of a religious revolution, the Brahmans appealed to the Veda, as the authority for this sacred rite, and as they had the promise that their religious practices should not be interfered with, they claimed respect for the suttee. They actually quoted chapter and verse from the Rig-Veda; and Colebrook, the most accurate and learned Sanskrit scholar we have ever had, has translated this passage in accordance with their views—

"'Om; let these women not be widowed—good wives adorned with collyrium, holding clarified butter, consign themselves to the fire; immortal, not childless, not husbandless, well adorned with gems, let them pass into the fire, whose original element is water.'

"Now this is perhaps the most flagrant instance of what can be done by an unscrupulous priesthood. Here have thousands and thousands of lives been sacrificed, and a fanatical rebellion threatened on the authority of a passage which was mangled, mistranslated, and misapplied. . . . . The Rig-Veda, which now hardly one Brahman out of a hundred is able to read, so far from enforcing the burning of widows, shows clearly that this custom was not sanctioned during the earliest period of Indian history. According to the hymns of the Rig-Veda, and the vaidik ceremonial contained in the Grihya Sûtras, the wife accompanies the corpse of her husband to the funeral pile, but she is there addressed with a verse taken from the Rig-Veda, and ordered to leave her husband, and return to the world of the living. 'Rise, woman,' it is said, 'come to the world of life. Thou sleepest nigh unto him whose life is gone, come to us. Thou hast thus fulfilled thy duties of a wife to a husband who once took thy hand and made thee a mother.' The preceding verse should, it appears, run as follows:—'May those women who are not widows, but have good husbands, draw near with oil and butter. Those who are mothers may go up to the altar, without tears, without sorrow, but decked with fine jewels.'"—MAX MÜLLER. *Chips from a German Workshop.*

CHAPTER VIII.

Prolificness of Life in India—Hanging Ants' Nests—Bees—Curious Spider—The Mantis, or Praying Locust—Beautiful Butterflies—Ravages of Caterpillars—Purchases of Fossils, Shells, and Animals—Singular Moth—Sparrows and Crows—Legend of a Crow—The Sparrow Hawk—Snake Birds—The Owl—The Crow Pheasant—Honey Duckers—Fly-catchers.

IN Europe we must seek nature, in tropical climes nature seeks us. A curious collection of insects might be made without leaving one's chamber, and a small zoological garden stocked from the inhabitants of its roof. One evening M. called me into her bath-room, which was scattered over with numbers of small heaps, apparently as if quarts of lobster-spawn had been carelessly thrown down. These were large black ants, which had swarmed through the little drain in search of a cool and damp retreat. They were not disturbed, and in the morning only two or three stragglers remained.

The hanging ants' nests, suspended from the trees, were to me a novelty. I at first imagined them to be birds' nests. When found they are immediately destroyed, as the insects they contain sting badly, and are otherwise mischievous. Their habitations, which are perfectly round, and about the size of a cocoa-nut, are composed of layers of leaves, neatly placed, and secured at the edge by some glutinous substance which hardens.

Bees flew in and out of my room at will, for they are insects that never molest me, even if they settle upon my hand. Day after day did one of these creatures come into my room bearing some small burden, which it deposited behind the glass of my mirror, taking advantage of a place from which the veneer was chipped off. I expect some of these days to see a small family issue from this spot. The mason bee also would come and erect his conical house of mud.

Another species of bee took a fancy to my room, and flew in and out, bearing green leaves of an oval shape, larger than itself, which it carefully placed beneath the folds of a black lace veil lying on a table near one of the garden windows. This was carefully left open at night, lest the creature's labours should be interrupted,

but at the end of two days we had to disturb it, for this same table was the favourite abiding place of a Persian cat. By this time, however, the insect had formed a nest, which somewhat resembled the blossom of the hop. The leaves were neatly cut, as it were, out of larger ones, which it had pilfered from a rose-bush. In the middle they were tightly rolled in the form of a cylinder, and the bee had provided for its future progeny by depositing a store of coarse, deep yellow honey at the end of it. When expelled, the insect came in at another window, and attempted to make its nest under the case of a pillow which lay at the back of my reading-chair.

A fourth sort of bee sought to make my chamber its home. It got into a book, which was partly open, a pamphlet having been left within its leaves. There it deposited a string of what looked like tiny sausages, three to the inch, between each of which there was a ring of mud, and from each there sprung an arch of the same substance, so placed, I presume, with the design of strengthening the structure. The workmanship was very neat.

The most curious of the insect tribe that attracted my observation was a spider, which was sent to me by a friend. It had a plump body,

which was about the size of a large pea, with bars of black and yellow across it, the latter just touched up with a rim of red. It had four principal legs, which almost covered an equal number of somewhat shorter ones. I was rather embarrassed with my new acquisition, but he appeared to take kindly to the corner of one of my windows which was seldom opened, and lost no time in suspending himself from a long thread. In this position I left him at night, and when I went the first thing in the morning to see how he was getting on, what was my astonishment to find that in the middle of a large untidy web he had formed a cross, or, to speak more precisely, two long poles, made of a dead white silky substance, which crossed one another, like the letter X. One was slightly longer than the other, and measured close upon four inches, being two straws' breadths in width. I called G—— to see it. We were both exceedingly surprised, and gave strict orders that it should not be disturbed. How great, then, was our vexation, in a small way, on finding that at bed time the white cross and the web had disappeared, the spider, as before, being suspended from a thread. Next morning there were the web and the cross again, and on the reverse side the spider, who had ingeniously concealed

his body in the middle, two legs lying straight along each beam. On the second night we found the web again destroyed, but it reappearing in the morning as before. The third night I came in earlier than usual, in order to watch him. His web was all but gone, and he had rolled his cross into a hard white ball the size of a pea. Unfortunately, alarmed by the light, he dropped to the ground, made off, and came to an untimely end, being trodden upon during the search for him.

We described the feats of this curious insect to several people, among the rest to a gentleman who had a good cabinet of natural history, but no one seemed to be acquainted with a creature of similar habits, and although we offered to pay the gardener who had captured him a good sum, if he could procure us another of the same species, he was never able to do so. I was so struck with the white cross that when first I saw it I measured it, and made a rough sketch of the web.

There is not a more curious insect than the mantis, a species of locust. You may tend a rose-bush day after day, and never discover its presence, unless, perchance, you happen to remark what appears like a twig walking off before your eyes. The first of these insects which

I caught was vulgarly called the praying locust, as, when touched, it beats the air with its fore-legs (so like arms) in a deprecating manner. It was about three inches in length, with gauzy wings, so tightly folded round the thin body as to be almost invisible. Its flat-faced head, and sensitive antlers, were in perpetual motion, and it exhibited the greatest uneasiness whilst in captivity, crawling awkwardly round and round its glass cage. This mantis, whilst waiting for its insect prey, folds its long arms before it, and, if necessary, remains perfectly still for hours; but if an unsuspicious fly comes too near, it seizes it in a moment. The bamboo mantis resembles the cane, which is its place of abode. Its body is light green tinged with yellow, and its centre is marked by a ring like the joint in a young branch of the plant. When the bamboo leaves turn brown, the insect assumes the same hue. Whilst in this state, I put one of them upon a shrub near my window, where it remained motionless for a couple of days; and although I knew it to be my friend, I was at last almost tempted to believe that it was nothing but a dry stick with a few twigs attached to it. Another specimen of mantis—an inch and a half in length—was brought by G—— from the jungle. The thick body—

indeed, the whole creature—was a fresh tender green. Its chief peculiarity was the hood, which fitted tightly over the neck and shoulders, and then rose over the back, so as to resemble a delicately-veined rose-leaf, slightly indented at the edge, and just touched with brown, as by the sun. The mantis is the most pugnacious of insects, and in some parts of the East they are kept in cages, and set to fight with one another.

The fort is celebrated for the beauty and variety of its butterflies and birds. We caught several of the former, but only to subject them to a short captivity, determined, should we be on the spot another year, to have the proper appliances in readiness to make a collection. Many a morning did I spend in gathering ferns and wild flowers in the hedgerows, and watching the glintings of these lovely creatures. One butterfly which I put under a bell glass measured seven inches across. Its black velvet wings had ribs and spots of a light metallic green; another, the peacock butterfly, had its black wings marked with eyes of azure and garter blue; the dark hue of a third was relieved by the vivid scarlet of the body; and some were of pure grey and white, with a shimmer which made one think of moonshine.

There is a Persian legend which lingers in

the Deccan. It tells of a goddess who abides in a golden Mohure, but at sunrise flies abroad, tinges the flowers, and paints the insect world, her brushes the brightest of feathers, and her palette the rainbow.

Not so elegant in form, but equally glorious, were the moths—yellow and bronze, soft brown and crimson. The only manner of obtaining perfect specimens of these creatures is to obtain caterpillars and hatch them. One day I found a chrysalis suspended from a shrub in the garden. It resembled a small immature acorn. Nothing could be more delicate than the sea-green wavy substance, and ah! the coquetry of Nature!—the cup was edged by a ring of twisted gold. Never was Etruscan filigree more perfect. And there were three great golden flecks at the end of the pod. I carefully guarded my treasure. Its transformation was very sudden. Looking at it after an interval of ten minutes, my beautiful drop of jade stone and gold had disappeared, and was replaced by a very ordinary crumpled reddish-brown butterfly, in colour an exact match to the blossom of the shrub on which I had found it. We put it on a tree in the sunshine, and in a few minutes it flew over the house, and settled on the bush from which it had drawn its nourishment in a former con-

dition. I was so much interested that I searched the plant, and was fortunate enough to obtain a caterpillar. I fed it with the leaves, and in due time it changed to a green pulpy substance, and in half an hour the pod was formed. The neck of the creature had become a rope, and the head had separated into fibres, by which it had attached itself to the twig which I had placed near it; but a disappointment awaited me. There was the twist, and there were the spots, but in dead white; however, in twenty-four hours they changed to gold. The same sort of butterfly was produced, and it sought the yellow-brown blossom, as the former insect had done.

"It is believed by some men of science," says Pouchet, "that plants only preserve their original purity because their faithful visitors consecrate the whole of their existence to them, and never wander to another species."

Our rose-trees were much damaged by the ravages of a large caterpillar, very handsome, nearly three inches long. The body was bright green, with white curves along the sides; and it had great rings of violet round the eyes, which gave them an expression of great fierceness. For nearly a month it was most voracious, after which it became torpid and changed

into its chrysalis state. In a few days the shape of the wings was visible through the semi-transparent shroud; the insect came forth at last, a magnificent hawk-moth. Its wings were striped with shades of pink and dove colour, and zigzags of green, certain parts being marked out in black. The under-wings were cut out in angles. After a time we allowed it to flutter away and join its kindred.

Sometimes a native naturalist would bring round fossils, shells, and specimens of the animal kingdom, and we bought a great deal of rubbish, in the hope of one day picking up something precious. I bought from one of these men half a dozen of the Tusseror silk-moth. They were large and clumsy, and downy, of a brown and brimstone colour; but in one respect they were very remarkable. In the centre of each wing there was a circular hole, through which a large pea could have been passed, and this orifice was glazed in by a clear substance, resembling talk. Placed close to the eye, through it one could discern the most distant objects. For what good object Nature introduced this window it is difficult to conceive, unless it might be to lighten the structure, just as the old Romans built rows of bulging pots into their walls in order to diminish their weight.

There were numbers of birds in the fort, which, like ourselves, might be termed residents. Some came to seek the peaceful shelter of the high trees during the breeding season, or found in the thick bushes and quiet nooks places of security, when the fierce winds drove the pelting rain over the plains, and every puddle became a miniature sea. An ornithologist might have sat at his ease and made many a curious observation respecting the habits of these feathered tribes, some of which had pleasant songs, but others for hours together would utter the most monotonous notes, which increased and decreased in volume with a regularity which was enough to drive a nervous person into a fever; and woe to the mortal who, in a moment of excitement, connected words with these sounds. For months I took the metallic clang of the coppersmith to be the sound of a steam hammer at work in the arsenal. There was the cuckoo, with his never-ceasing "Who are you?—who are you?" As for one of our friends, he lost half his rest, and became pale under the constant repetition of "A pint of beer!—a pint of beer!"

Of course the universal sparrow was there, flying in at one window and out at another; and one had even attempted to build a nest in

one of the glazed recesses which gave additional light to the lofty drawing-room. But these birds are distinct from those of Europe, being smaller, of an ashy tint, and having a good deal of white about their plumage. Natives are fond of sparrows, and hang up earthen vessels in their verandahs for them to breed in, which they do readily.

Crows were everywhere—handsome birds—nearly twice the size of our own. Their necks were iron grey, their other feathers black, with a purple shimmer; and they had very large and somewhat curved bills. Their exceeding impertinence rendered them interesting and amusing. During meal times a flock would take up a commanding position, and in turns dart down and steal pet morsels. If a dish in the kitchen verandah happened to be left for a moment unguarded, its contents would speedily disappear. For very grave offences (such as stealing G——'s pet caladiums just as they were sprouting) some of them occasionally got shot, and then for a time the survivors were very wary. Crows are known in every part of the world excepting Australia.

In the sacred books belonging to the Hindoos, the following legend respecting a crow is to be found:—

"A very wicked person had exceeded every known possibility of salvation, and gods and holy men met together at the court of Indra for the purpose of discussing the enormities of which he had been guilty. Indra, in answer to a pointed question, said that nothing certainly could expiate such sins, except the use of sacred ashes. It happened that a crow, named, for her friendly disposition, Mitra Ka-ka, was present, and flew to impart the welcome news to the despairing sinner, who immediately performed the proper ceremony, and went to heaven. This expiation consisted in the sinner's covering his whole body with a thick coat of cow-dung, which, when dry, was set on fire, and consumed both the sin and the offender. Until revealed by the crow, this potent charm was known only to the gods, and these birds were ever after excluded from the councils of Indra, and doomed to feed on offal. The natives believe that the man who refuses to his father or mother the food they desire, will, after due punishment in hell, be born a crow, and then a man, in which latter condition no kind of food will have any relish for him."*

* From remote ages there have been superstitions connected with birds. They are very numerous in India; the Hindoo believes that, if a vulture, a heron, a dove, an owl,

The crow finds its master in the Drougo Shrihe, commonly called the "king of the crows," a bird eleven inches long, slim and elegant in shape, and with a forked tail. Its plumage is brilliantly black, with a very little dark grey, and one white spot. It pursues, not only the crow, but the hawk, and even the kite, its object being to drive them away from the locusts and other food in which it delights. It will even attack the palm squirrel. The sagacity of this bird is very great, and some people declare that, if it sees a larger bird than itself in pursuit of a coveted insect, it will, in order to induce the pursuer to relinquish the chase, follow it, uttering the cry of some common enemy, for it is an excellent imitator. Rows of the Drougo Shrihe are to be seen at sunset perching upon the telegraph wires, uttering shrill shrieks.*

Among the birds which circled over our heads was the sparrow-hawk, much valued in days of

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a hawk, a gull, or a kite, settles upon his house, some dire calamity is impending, which he can only avert by giving the value of the house to the Brahmans, or by making a peace-offering of the most extraordinary nature (see WARD'S "View," &c., p. 160), after which the sacrificial fees (the essential part of the ceremony) are paid to the priests, and peace is restored to the dwelling.

* See JERDON'S "Birds of India," vol. i.

yore, when falconry was a favourite sport with the Máhrattas. Although it is not now pursued in this part of the Deccan, it is kept up with vigour in other places, and many remember the day when the peasant went about with a bird upon his hand, ready to let slip at a partridge, a quail, or a parrakeet. Some hawks are caught in an ingenious but very cruel manner. A stick, about a foot in length, is thickly daubed with bird-lime, and some small bird—generally a dove—is tied to its centre. When the hawk is seen, the unhappy captive, which has its eyes sewed up to make it soar, is let loose. The enemy pounces upon it; its wings strike the limed twig, and it falls to the ground.

Some Hindoos believe Garuda, the steed of Vishnu, to be the sparrow-hawk. Garuda waged fierce war against the serpents, and when he espoused a beautiful woman, they, fearing the power of his progeny, sought to destroy him. But the mighty bird vanquished all save one, which he placed as an ornament round his neck. He is thus represented at Elephanta. In Rama's last conflict with Ravana, a sparrow-hawk was sent to destroy the serpent-arrows of Ravana. Others declare that the agent of Vishnu was the Brahmanic kite, the usefulness of which was, perhaps, originally the cause

why, like the cow, it received a protecting legend in the popular superstition of the Hindoos. The audacity of this kite is so great that Mr. Moor absolutely saw one seize a chop from a gridiron upon the fire.*

One day some natives brought in a couple of snake-birds, which they had captured near the tank. This bird feeds upon fish and small frogs, not upon snakes. In the water it floats so low that nothing of it is seen but its long thin neck, which it keeps constantly wriggling about—hence its popular name.

The ripening rice brought to the fore a number of storks, the plumage of the prettiest of which was pure white. Under the guidance of a leader, they streamed along the sky, diminishing to mere specks, and then would swoop down so low that we could hear the flapping of their wings. I had considerable regard for these birds. Six storks were my father's armorial bearings, as was often the case in the olden time—a pun upon the name to which they were attached.

Of the garden birds some were always with us, others were but delightful visitants, who marked the seasons as they came and departed. A large and nearly white owl, which inhabited

* Moor's "Hindoo Pantheon."

one of the tamarind-trees, flew whirring about in the dusk, and sometimes picked up the fragments of a delicate cream-coloured egg; and there were little owls of different species, which were brown. The owl is a sacred bird with the Hindoos. The cuckoo is a wild bird, of which we had more than one specimen. I never fairly got to see the distinguishing colour of their plumage, but one of them had a back and wings of shimmering green, and was spotted grey and white. This bird was a pest. It had a shrill, loud call, which it repeated each time on a higher key, with increasing intensity, until exhausted. Natives eat this cuckoo, but the flavour of the flesh is said to be very unpleasant. The note of the Plaintive Cuckoo is very remarkable. It is a ventriloquist, and when close to you it emits a sound which, in your fancy, proceeds from the other side of the garden.

I was delighted with a caucal, or crow-pheasant, which had left the Malabar jungles in order to pay us a visit during the rains. It was very slim, and not really larger than a partridge, but its long glossy green tail, square-cut at the end, gave it an appearance of greater size. It had rich purple plumage on its breast and back, but its wings were a rufous bay, and

the crimson irides were strongly marked. It ran along the branches with great celerity, but it walked as well as the ordinary pheasant, and was so tame that it would come into the verandah, where I threw bread to it in vain, for it feeds only upon reptiles. It had a loud, deep, sonorous call, resembling the sound of "Whoot! whoot!" I was told that this bird makes a large nest of twigs and flag leaves, domed at the top, with an aperture at the side.

The white-winged black robin is a charming bird, as impudent and perky, and much the same in form as our European favourite, but very different in plumage. In the adult male, the head, back, and tail are glossy black, the wing is striped and lined with white, and at certain seasons the breast and belly are a rufous grey. It has the habit of jerking up its tail until it all but touches its head. It has a pleasant piping song. This bird is not migratory, and is very domestic. It will peck about close to the house, and regard all that it sees with an air of curiosity.

The plumage of the renowned Indian bulbul (at least that of our bird—there are many specimens) was a very dark slate colour, which melted into black, the head and neck having a

tinge of metallic green. It had a little pointed crest, which it partially raised without moving its head, and one great crimson spot under the tail. The bubbling note was very cheerful, and the bird is said to imitate with great precision the songs of other feathered creatures. The bulbul is very tame. It belongs to the family of short-legged thrushes.

The most familiar of all these winged creatures were a pair of sleek little wagtails, which would pick up insects at my feet, and follow me if I changed my seat. They were pretty little creatures, with blue-grey feathers, streaked with others of darker shades, and their breasts were of tender yellow. Their long tails vibrated with every breath they drew, and they would utter a clear cry, like, "Twee, twee," which was pleasant to the ear. The wagtail is almost venerated by the Hindoos, who make a reverence whenever they pass it, because it is considered to be a form of Vishnu, on account of certain marks upon its neck resembling those upon the salagrama stone.

The honey-suckers, with their brilliant colours, more like great insects than birds, darted about, dipping their long thin curved bills into the flowers, without doing them any injury. The rosy-winged parrakeet, which is very destruct-

ive in a kitchen-garden, rose early in the morning in clouds from our peas if disturbed. At sunset they flew from tree to tree with loud shrieks. Some people tame these birds, but in captivity they are stupid and very difficult to rear.

After the rains we had numbers of fly-catchers. One rare and beautiful member of this family is called the phantom-bird, from the puffy lightness of its feathers, and the quickness with which it darts from some secret place, wheels round, and disappears. Several times did one of these birds lead me into difficulties. Anxious that G—— should see it, whenever I caught a glimpse of its long tail, I ran to find him. Twice in an early stage of my toilette did I hasten into the dining-room, and find myself face to face with a strange creature in a black coat, who was taking a matutinal cup of tea with M. At last the phantom-bird came to be considered a delusion of my imagination; but my turn was to come.

One morning G—— rushed into the house breathless. "Quick! quick!—my rifle! By Jove! there is such a bird!" Bang! bang! and he returned with my poor phantom-bird, who proved to be a bird of Paradise, fly-catcher, or racket-tailed drougo. With the exception of a

little white, the bird was entirely black, with a beautiful green gloss over it; and its head was crested. It was a very small creature, with delicate perching claws, its peculiar characteristic being the two long and slender white feathers which streamed out ten inches beyond its ordinary tail. He must have been very adroit to have preserved these appendages so perfectly. They were seldom found uninjured. It gave me a pang to think that the poor bird would never again glint about in the glorious sunshine. He was embalmed, and put into a bamboo coffin, where he awaits the skilful hand of W. One night I found in my room an ordinary sort of fly-catcher, with a large bill, broad at the base, hooked, and rather flat, a white throat specked with black, and other feathers of a full green.

In my early walks I used to see numbers of smaller birds of this description, and some of them were wonderfully pretty, with plumage of the tenderest green, and under the throat a strongly-marked crescent of ruddy brown. They were furnished also with a pair of long, slim feathers, which terminated in a lobe. They haunted the refuse heaps near the stables, and the old fort walls. It was delightful to watch them as they darted to and fro, very familiar,

and full of curiosity, fluttering on to a branch, and remaining until one was close to them, and then speeding off, to repeat the same manœuvre. Once or twice I saw a lovely specimen of the fly-catcher, with its blue throat, in consequence of which the Hindoos call it Nilakantha, after one of the names of Shiva. The legend runs that, at the churning of the ocean (after the deluge) by the gods and demi-gods, necessary for the recovery of fourteen sacred things, a deadly poison was generated, so virulent that it would have destroyed the world, had not the god Shiva swallowed it. Its only effect was to leave a deep blue stain in his throat, whence he was called Nilakantha, and the name came to be applied to the bird.

CHAPTER IX.

The Tailor-bird—Weaver-bird—Its Remarkable Intelligence—The Mango-bird—Southern Green Pigeon—The Hornbill—Snakes, Venomous and Harmless—Chase of a Cobra—Cure of Snake Bites—Exciting Scene—Chameleons—Lizards—Bats—Palm Squirrels—The Musk Rat—Strange Assemblage of Animals—Cry of the Cigales—Voices of the Night.

THE tailor-bird was good enough to construct its nest in the garden. The name took me back to my youthful days—to Beau Brummel's pretty poem, where

> "The tailor-bird offered to make up new clothes
> For all the young birdlings who wished to be beaus."

It placed it in a beautiful red and brown shrub—the acalypher. Before we discovered the work which was progressing, it had picked up a fallen leaf, and attached it by some half-dozen stitches to one upon the plant, so as to form a pointed sack. A third leaf, which had been brought, and was suspended by a thread,

dangled down in a purposeless fashion. It had probably been chosen, and afterwards rejected. The sack was lined with fine white wool, fibre, and bits of thread. Later on I had an opportunity of examining the nest, and I came to the conclusion that two sorts of thread had been employed in sewing it together. One was the ordinary cotton, stolen from the verandah where the dérseis worked; the other, I fancied, had been made by itself. We had a bush in the garden which we sometimes experimented upon, breaking the stalks, and drawing out fine threads upwards of a yard in length, which, when exposed to the air, hardened and became milk-white, like some of those employed upon the sewing of the nest. The gardeners had orders to respect this curious construction, as we were desirous of seeing the eggs, as to the appearance of which naturalists differ, some declaring them to be white spotted with brown, whilst others affirm that they are crimson. In spite of all our care the nest was rifled, and its inmate driven away. The bird is small—less than an English sparrow, its plumage light brown, with a little mixture of olive green, and the tail has a narrow white border.

Though not common in our part of the Deccan, the weaver-bird bred freely about Belgaum,

and exhibited a decided predilection for the fort. It constructs its nest either of grass plucked whilst green, of threads from the plantain leaf, or of strips from the palm; but it prefers the fibre of the cocoa-nut. It loves to suspend its elegant habitation from the palmyra, or some other lofty tree, and breeds with impunity during the stormiest part of the monsoon. When the nests had served their purpose, and were deserted, we collected them, and hung them up in the trees. They are very curious—their shape has been likened to that of a retort. A pair begin their labours by forming a loop, in which, when complete, the female sits, leaving the cock-bird to fetch the materials and work on the outside of the nest, while she works on the inside, drawing in the fibres pushed through by the male, placing them in their proper position, and smoothing all carefully. Naturalists are much puzzled as to the use of certain lumps of clay, which at a certain stage are stuck into the nests. The imaginative native believes that the clay is used to stick fire-flies upon, and thus light up the apartment at night—at least, such is the reason given in an old book on Natural History, written by Ali Khan, a native of Delhi, a work unique of its kind, which has been translated into English,

and is very curious. The more practical Europeans suggest that they may serve for the bird to sharpen his bill upon, or to strengthen the nest, or, most likely of all, that the clay is merely used as ballast, in order to prevent the fibre from being blown upside down during the stormy period chosen for hatching. In one nest which was examined, there were found to be four ounces of mud, in six different patches, and the nest was perfectly impervious to rain.

The plumage of the weaver is a dull brown, shaded with lighter tints of the same hue, and a little yellow as bordering. In the breeding season the feathers on the head of the male bird become bright yellow. They are generally to be found in the vicinity of rice fields, of which grain they are particularly fond. These singular birds are remarkable for their intelligence, and are taught all sorts of tricks by the natives. They are carried about by their exhibitors, and many of my friends have witnessed their clever feats. They are taught to pick up cardamum seeds, and place one between the lips of each of the ladies before whom they may be exhibiting. Another trick is to load a miniature gun with little pellets of gunpowder, to use a ramrod in a proper manner, and then, taking a lighted match from its master, to apply it to the

powder, nothing daunted by the report, which is loud enough to rouse the ire of other birds, finally perching upon the gun, and looking around with the most self-satisfied air. The weaver can also be trained as a carrier, and will take letters, but for no great distance. The natives are very adroit in taming all sorts of creatures, their success in the art being the result of kindness and patience.

The Indian oreal, or mango-bird, which differs from the European oreal, was one of our most beautiful visitants. Its plumage was bright yellow and black. I did not myself see the nest of this bird, but it must be very curious. Jerdon describes it in the following manner :— "I procured a nest at Sangor from a high branch of a banyan-tree in cantonment. It was situated between the forks of a branch, made of fine roots and grass, with some hair and a feather or two internally, and suspended by a long roll of cloth about three quarters of an inch wide, which it must have pilfered from a neighbouring verandah, where the tailor worked. This strip was wound round each fork, then passed round the nest beneath, fixed to the other fork, and again brought round the nest to the opposite side. There were four or five of these supports on each side. It was indeed a most curious

nest, and so securely fixed that it could not have been removed till the supporting bands had been cut or rotted away."

I might multiply to a fatiguing extent descriptions of the birds by which we were surrounded —possibly I have already dwelt too long upon my favourites, but they were very charming, and many a traveller, resplendent in gold and scarlet, purple and green, glinted by with whom I never became acquainted.

Occasionally wild-looking men from the Malabar and Cannara jungles brought in specimens along with their game. The southern green pigeon was one of their pretty birds, and one which often escapes the observation of amateur sportsmen, from its colours so closely resembling those of the leaves of the trees it frequents.

G—— returned on one occasion from a shooting expedition, bringing with him the heads of a male and female hornbill, a bird found in the midst of the forests of Malabar, from the extreme south up to Goa. The size of its curved yellow, orange, and black bill is truly astonishing; at the first glance it made one think of the claw of some monster crab. The upper bill of the male, taking the curve, measured no less than thirteen and a half inches, and to this was appended an

enormous casque, which covered the top of the head, and reached far down the bill. This curious piece of armour, which was a vivid orange red, was seven and a half inches in length, three and a half broad, and two inches in depth. The body is small in comparison, and the plumage, which is black and white, and much yellow-stained with a secretion which the bird presses out of a gland on the back, is coarse. The tail feathers are rather handsome, pure white, with bars of black. The noise of the wings can be heard a mile away. The bird lives principally, if not entirely, upon fruit, which it procures in a peculiar manner. Throwing itself off its perch, it twists and flaps its wings until the object it desires is detached from the tree, when it recovers itself, catches the fruit ere it reaches the ground, and swallows it whole.

The hornbill breeds in the holes of large trees. The male builds the female in, leaving only room for her bill to protrude, and during her incubation feeds her with the choicest fruits. She is said to be very angry if anything presented to her is bruised or broken, and the natives declare that she is killed by the male if she breaks out of her nest. Different races call "the King of the Jungle" by different names. By some this monarch is styled Kuchala

(Nux Vomica), in consequence of its fondness for the fruit of that tree; and, fit vehicle for Vishnu, some of the Hindoos call this powerful bird Garuda.

I must make mention of one more nest, although I am not aware of having seen the bird which fabricated it. It is edible, and found in such numbers in the rocks at Vingorla that they are farmed out by Government, and from thence a hundredweight annually are exported to China. A friend presented me with some of these curious habitations, which were about the size of a small oyster-shell, concave, and semi-transparent, and there appeared to be a good deal of fibre in the substance, crossing and recrossing it. Jerdon declares that it is a vulgar error to suppose that the composition is prepared in the stomach of the bird, the material, in his opinion, being elaborated in its salivary glands—"that it is, in fact, inspissated saliva." The nests were too precious to be delivered over to the cook, although soup was proposed, but we cut up and nibbled a portion of one of them, which we found to be glutinous, and very salt. All lovers of ornithology who are about to visit India should possess themselves of "The Birds of India," by J. C. Jerdon. In addition to which, those likely to

come westward, should procure a little pamphlet, "A Popular List of the Birds Found in the Marathi Country, with Short Notes," by the Rev. S. B. Fairbank, A.M. Printed at the Government Central Press, Bombay, 1876.

An entire genus of the snake family is only found in India, and the islands of Java and Ceylon. In a country where they are so numerous it is comforting to know that, taking all the known snakes, the number of those that are harmless is twenty times as great as the number of those that are poisonous. The venomous reptile is more usually found in the plains than in the jungle, and are distinguished by the sudden tapering of the tail. The very morning after my arrival I was introduced to one of these creatures. An immense specimen had been caught in some swampy green outside the fort, and the soldiers had laid it down at the entrance of our garden. It was a most disgusting sight, for it had been taken in the act of gorging itself with a bullfrog, which, at least a foot in length, was hanging in a mangled state from the reptile's mouth. It was very thick, and measured upwards of twelve feet. To my great indignation one of the men took it up and coiled it round the neck of a pretty little girl, who screamed with fright.

G—— had moved off, or this funny man would have had the worst of the joke. He was busy talking to some of the soldiers respecting a cobra known to dwell in an old Persian tomb in the centre of our compound, for the head of which ten shillings was to be paid. The men promised to do their best to catch the dangerous reptile, and were quite aware of its existence. There had formerly been a pair, but one of them had been shot. For some time nothing had been heard of the creature, and I had almost ceased to shun the neighbourhood of the ruin, when, not far from the spot, whilst sitting by my low garden window, I caught sight of it, crossing the gravel very leisurely. It came onwards as straight as an arrow, a long, thin, and grey serpent, probably about five feet in length. I was up in an instant, and calling to G——. He seized a stick, I clutched an umbrella, and out we rushed.

"Where is it?" exclaimed G——.

"There, by the fernery," I replied.

He was just in time to deal one blow upon the creature's tail before it vanished. Meanwhile, M. came running out with a drawn sword. The orderlies made their appearance, and the dersei came to our help, with the body of a dress in one hand, and a thimble in the other.

The butler joined the rest with a bread-knife, which he had snatched from the luncheon-table, and he was followed by a crowd of servants and gardeners, with all sorts of implements. Some natives in the road pretended to make themselves useful, but no Hindoo will kill a snake—a form in which they believe some of their demi-gods have appeared, and would probably rather have aided it to escape. All our united efforts, however, were in vain; the cobra was gone.

The thought that this creature was concealed about the grounds was very unpleasant, and so long as it remained uncaught, there was a feeling of insecurity in our moonlight strolls. The cobra, however, is a very timid kind of snake, and glides away on hearing the slightest rustle. Europeans heal the bite of the cobra with the strongest preparation of ammonia, and pour stimulants down the patient's throat. The natives give certain medicines made of herbs, but place their chief confidence in charms, in the virtue of certain stones, and in the endeavours of their priests to exorcise the evil spirit, which they believe to have obtained admittance through the wound. These modes of treatment are very different, but the result from all of them is the same—death almost invariably

ensues in about ten minutes. Some people declare that the root of the Justicia Coccinea is an effective antidote.*

Snakes are exceedingly long-lived, one identical creature being sometimes known to three generations of Hindoos in succession. At certain seasons snakes form quite a topic of conversation in an Indian station, and people are eager to tell their experiences on the subject. I related mine with regard to the cobra to a lady friend, who in return assured me that she had seen one pass "like lightning through a stone wall." Amazed by such a curious combination of circumstance, I faintly echoed, "Through a stone wall!" "Well, not through it," she replied—"of course, there must have been a hole, but we never could find it."

We had many other snakes adventures, some of them sufficiently unpleasant, but with the exception of the following, I refrain from relating them.

* Buckle gives a quotation from Bede respecting the cure of snake-bites, which is so amusing that I am tempted to insert it. The venerable historian, after stating that there are no such reptiles in Ireland, says—"In short, we have known that, when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scraping of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling."

One morning we were all out, actively employed in the garden, when a most extraordinary scene took place. The "missing link," who had just turned a corner with a basketful of cow-dung upon his head, suddenly bounded forward with a loud cry, and seizing some object, threw it upon the wide gravel path. It was the cobra at last—the one we had lost in our former chase. He rushed to the spot where the creature had fallen, and squatted down before it. With expanded hood, the hissing snake reared itself half up, and wriggling its body, darted its head about in all directions; but the man was immovable. He fixed his glowing eyes upon the reptile, and blew softly at it; but it dared not strike, though its hooded face was on a level with that of the man, its cold, oblique eye looking into his, not the length of a foot between them.

It was a magnificent spectacle. Seen against the light, the thick membrane of which the creature's hood was composed shone ruddy and brown. On each side it was marked by black wafer-like spots, called the spectacles; its throat was a livid blue, and its glistening coils were the colour of the earth. The dogs rushed in, and had to be dragged away with violence. The servants came flocking round; while some

European soldiers and native police regarded the scene from over the hedge. It was curious to mark the different expressions of the grave, attentive faces. Save for the angry hiss of the serpent, the scene passed in perfect silence. The man again and again breathed upon the reptile, seized it, stroked it, permitted its long length to curl round his limbs, and threw it away for the struggle to recommence. G—— became alarmed, and I was afraid that the man would be bitten, and then nothing could save him. "If you stop me," whispered the snake-charmer, "I will leave your service in an hour." The man, who was pale, almost rigid with suppressed excitement, called for a chatty-pot, a vessel with bulging sides and narrow neck. He continued to pat the creature, puffing at it till the enraged but subjugated cobra wriggled itself into the pot, when it was brought to him. G—— now insisted upon having the creature destroyed. "No, sir," said the man, "I am going to draw its poisonous fangs, and keep it as a tame snake." He got a sharp curved knife and some rag, and uncovering the pot, he blew into it, and on the appearance of the cobra's head, seized it shortly by the neck, obliged it to extend its jaws, and rammed a piece of the rag into its mouth, and down into

the throat. Then he drew the upper fangs, placed them carelessly upon a stone, withdrew the rag, and pronounced the creature to be harmless. He opened the mouth, and exposed the cavities which had contained the poisonous matter. "Now," he said, "I shall sell it. I shall get four rupees for it from a conjurer." In order to test the success of the operation, a chicken was brought, a few feathers were removed from its breast, and the poor thing was held before the serpent, who flew at it, drawing blood from a small wound; the bird was released, and, its fright over, fluttered away, and was none the worse.

It was the most exciting half-hour I ever passed. We afterwards measured the creature, and found that it was five feet two inches in length. I got G—— to question his malee respecting the power possessed by this man. Of course, he attributed it to magic; the influence he named by a Máhratta word, which signifies "glamour." He said that there were four men in Belgaum who could thus brave this most venomous of reptiles, "but," he added, "they were not people who were otherwise remarkable."

In the hot weather, when the chameleons came forth, it was very amusing to watch them

"at attention," in a military phrase, when they would rear themselves upon their fore-legs, assuming a sitting posture, and turn their wonderful projecting eyes about in every direction. I used to stalk these animals, and get quite close to them, almost holding my breath; but if a puff of wind rustled my dress, their dorsal fin would stiffen, the dull hue would be enlivened by a shimmer of bright green, and off they would scud, their heads and shoulders appearing a glowing semi-transparent red.

The lizards here have none of the jewelled colouring which makes those of Italy, and even more temperate climes, so beautiful. Ours were dull of hue and wrinkled. I should, however, make an exception in favour of the little animals which darted so nimbly about our walls and ceilings, unless they chanced to lose their footing, and flop down on to the table or into one's lap. They are never molested, as they are not only harmless, but useful, living as they do upon moths, and flies, and mosquitoes. They are commonly called chick-chacks, in imitation of the loud, cheerful noise they make, which is quite out of proportion to the diminutive size of their bodies. They would remain still for hours watching an insect, but the moment it moved they darted forward,

and licked it up with their long tongues. The chick-chacks, whose round black eyes are remarkably large, hid behind the picture frames and looking-glasses, were very tame, and would emerge into the light of the lamp. The substance of the creature is semi-transparent, resembling pink wax, through which its interior machinery was dimly visible. Sometimes they fight and lose their tails, which grow again—but the process is slow. These creatures certainly knew us, or, perhaps, our habits, for if, by chance, our rooms were occupied by other people, they disappeared, always, however, returning when we were re-installed.

There were the frogs—their name was legion—although of the ten species peculiar to Asia there are only three on the mainland. (America has more than all the other countries put together—Europe the fewest.) A shower, and out they would pour. At first it was Bustle's great amusement to chase them—a sport which he was permitted to enjoy, for the frogs had the best of it, spitting so violently that he never dared to touch them.

One day such a shower came down that they were flooded out of their subterranean dwellings. Out they poured, and in the midst of them stood Bustle, still with astonishment.

"I never saw such a sight as this!" was the sentiment written upon his countenance. One specimen was mustard colour, and none of them had the nimble and active forms that I had been accustomed to see. They were dull, large, and puffy, and until I noticed that they jumped, I took them to be toads. They by no means confined themselves to the exterior of the house, but came in numbers into the rooms, and would set up loud concerts in obscure corners. At first I tried to marshal them out with the end of my parasol; but I soon gave that up, for they are the most persevering of creatures; and if they take a fancy to a particular place, they will return to it again and again, in spite of all you can do. In the middle of the rains the baby frogs made their appearance, and made me think of Pharaoh's troubles; but I not only got used to them, but liked to look up from my book or my letter and watch the bright-eyed little things, which were sure to be regarding me curiously.

We had plenty of bats, and many little ones attempted to hook themselves up in the verandahs, but they were always dislodged, in consequence of the bad smell with which they infected their abiding places. A great deal of our fruit was carried off, or spoiled, by the great

bat which is commonly called the "flying fox." As soon as the sun had set, numbers came forth, cutting through the air, and uttering shrill cries of joy. A friend one morning sent me down a large specimen, which had been caught in her garden. I was so sorry for the poor thing, which was suspended between two sticks. It was about a foot long, the body was covered with soft fur of a rich yellow-brown, its nose and ears were pointed, and it had the prettiest of little faces, with velvetty brown eyes, which I fancied regarded me reproachfully. So far it greatly resembled the fox, but Reynard's great beauty, his magnificent brush, was wanting. Nothing could be more delicate than the India-rubber-like texture of its wings, so beautifully stretched in quarters over the bony skeleton, each point terminating in a great hook. Its long, useless-looking legs were furnished with soft paws. In Japan the same species of bat attains more than double the size of its Indian congener. They are often eaten, and the flesh is said to be white and delicate. The creature feeds entirely upon vegetable matter, and is migratory. It only remained with us about three months, whilst the mangoes and guavas were in season.

We had numbers of the palm squirrel, the nimblest and the tamest of their race. Their bodies were so thin and lithe that at first I took them to be some sort of weasel. Their backs were black, with three broad stripes of white running down them, and their sides and bellies were grey. Their prettiest part was a great feathery tail, as long as themselves, which looked as if it had been touched up with frost. It was most amusing to watch the gambols of these creatures. When I came to sit out of doors, they would regard me at first very curiously, from a safe distance, and then, coming to the conclusion that I was not an enemy, they would play about, and appeared to have some sort of fancy for my neighbourhood. At first the shrill cries of these animals distressed me, for I thought that they proceeded from a creature in pain, and I used to go out and see if I could succour it. I soon found, however, that it was only their mode of expressing joy. Clinging tightly to a tree, at each cry they would give a great flap with their handsome tails.

A kind of large rat, a bandicoot, a burrowing animal, which was very destructive in the garden, was very wary, and had often to be dug out of its hole. The mongoose, a large sort of

ferret, with thick soft fur, and the most magnificent of tails, was very intelligent, and easily tamed.

We were sometimes visited by the musk rat, which left behind it the most unpleasant odour. If it passed over a bottle of soda water, or even of wine, these articles had to be thrown away. The perfume it left after it had been near a basket of eggs was equally unpleasant. The creature is small, and easily caught, as it is quite blind. If it enters a room it clings to the walls.

The Hindoos say that he who eats excellent food without sharing it with others, will be punished in hell thirty thousand years, then be born a musk rat, afterwards a musk deer, and finally a man, whose body will emit an offensive odour.

We had other rats in abundance, but they lived in the roof of the house. In strange juxtaposition to the rats, there were, we knew, wild cats, squirrels, and owls. I used to fancy that each fortified his abode after the manner of certain Italian citizens of the Middle Ages. Great battles were fought over-head at night, and often have I stopped my ears in order to avoid hearing the cries of the vanquished; and if I looked up at the canvas ceiling, I could see where the

paws of the combatants indented it. With us midnight and daydawn were more troubled by discordant sounds than midday. We had not only the noisy encounters to which I have just referred, but also the hoarse notes of the night birds, and the flapping of their heavy wings. A hyena would come down from the parched hills to drink at the tank, and set all the dogs barking with its laughing howl, while the frogs from their corners croaked applause to the concerts which their kind were giving. Outside the cigales uttered their musical click-click, so like the sound of castanets played in triplets. It is said that the metallic sound uttered by these insects can be heard at a distance of two miles. Possibly a great beetle would enter, and make a drum of the ceiling, or a cat might jump in at the window, which was of necessity open. One night M. was visited by a jackal, and once I had to get up and turn a huge buffalo, with horns nearly a yard long, out of the verandah. Then, in the marrying months, and those in which the drivers of the cotton carts camped, the perpetual thump, thump of the tom-tom beat against the battlements with an echo, which was an additional woe. Before it was possible to distinguish objects, the bugle would sound, the arsenal gong would summon bands of native

workmen, who trooped along, chattering in babbling tones. If Tom Moore had lived in our bungalow, he would never have written "Oft in the Stilly Night."

CHAPTER X.

Holiday Trip to Goa—Preparations for a Journey—Gipsies of Western India—The Night Encampment—Fortress of Nandi Ghar—Road Through the Jungle—The Rám Ghât—Rámling Pagoda—The Mancheel—Caste—Travelling in a Bullock Cart—Village of Betse—A Native School—Crossing a River—On Portuguese Territory—Urasians, or Mistici.

IN the month of February, G—— contrived to afford himself a ten days' holiday, and as I was desirous of seeing Goa, he arranged so as to combine a visit there with a few days' sport. The usual route, which is also the longest, is by the direct road to the British fort of Vingorla, and then by a coasting steamer; but a road, long disused, save by bullocks, smugglers, and sportsmen, possessed for us greater attractions, the scenery over the great ghâts being very fine, and the Shikar superior. Three days before we started, G——'s writer was despatched on horseback to Goa, in order to secure accommodation,

and the following evening a cart was sent off, in charge of G——'s servant, heavily laden with the necessaries of life, as well as some of its luxuries. There were easy-chairs and bedding, cooking pots, bread, tinned provisions, live ducks, guns, fishing-tackle, and the toilettes in which we were to shine at Goa, all heaped up together. I confess I saw my best bonnet depart with many misgivings, and strict orders were given that the ducks should not be allowed to sit upon the box. To enhance the solemnity of the expedition, the puttah-wallee—not, to be sure, in his pinky satin robe, but well got up in long coat and badge—was to accompany us.

We set off on a beautiful afternoon, passing through the animated crowd, assembled in order to see the tarbouts thrown into the water. Our tonga—a two-wheeled vehicle, holding four people back to back, calculated for rough travelling—sped merrily along up short, steep bits of hill, and across dried-up water-courses. The stout ponies were well up to their work, sometimes picking their way, at others galloping at true tonga pace. The road over the moors was very solitary. We only met two or three men, who were on their way to the Belgaum bazaars, laden with glittering glass bangles, red and green, strung in loops and hung from long

poles. We passed a large encampment of gipsies, evidently of low caste, for they were herding pigs, in India a most unpopular animal. There are many races of these curious wanderers in Western India, where the gipsies were employed as foragers by the old Máhrattas in their wars. They worship Baneshankari, the goddess of forests, and also the ferocious Kali. Some people believe that they practise infanticide, and still, when in remote places, offer up human sacrifices. Not many days before our journey, a body of these people, who had great herds of bullocks, pitched their tents near Belgaum, and G—— tried, but without success, to secure, as a model for M., one of the women, who was tall and handsome, and wore a short petticoat, with gaiters, and coverings for the arms composed of cowrie shells, strings of which were also woven into her long black hair.

Wilder and wilder grew the country as we looked upon the backs of the jungly hills which turned their faces towards Belgaum, bathed in hues of rosy purple, as the mingled rays of the setting sun and the rising moon struggled for mastery. Great cotton-trees, in full blossom, patched the landscape with colour. Some, covered with large blood-red flowers, looked

like the magnified pirus japonicus; others were of a full pink; whilst some again were white, with the delicate flush of the apple blossom.

About every eight miles we found fresh tattoos, or ponies, awaiting us, on which occasions it was necessary to alight, for no sooner was the vehicle at liberty than down went the shafts, and the back seat, the place of honour, was tilted up. These delays were very pleasant, as we had time to stroll into the adjacent villages, which were not such as I had been used to see stretching along the side of the road, but were hidden away under trees of heavy foliage, which bent their boughs to the ground. The long, large huts looked like hay-stacks, for the thatch descended very low. At first I did not like the dogs that met us, barking, but I became reconciled to them when I found that they were perfectly amenable to reason, in the shape of a stone.

Sometimes we walked quietly about the meadows, for the air was keen, and watched the peaceful white bullocks, who, relieved from their pack-saddles, were quietly chewing the cud, sheltered by the rampart of baggage they had borne during the day. Here and there their drivers formed a circle, and gathered warmth from a few blazing sticks. The whole

atmosphere was so luminous that we could easily have read good-sized print. The road gradually became very rough, but the view was charming as we approached the great tabular hill which is crowned by the fine fortress of Nandi Ghar, rising above Patna. Standing twelve hundred feet above the plain, a little to the south, rose black Handman Gash, which, as far as I could make out, was one of two rather celebrated fortresses called "The Heart Ravishing," and "The Mind's Delight," which were subdued by the English in the Southern Máhratta campaign of 1845.

Leaving Patna behind, we plunged into deep jungle, and began to ascend the Rám Ghât. The winding road soon became a succession of steps, from a foot to a foot and a half high, banked up every thirty or forty yards by large rough stones, so placed in order to prevent the road from being washed away during the monsoon, which breaks with the utmost violence upon the summit of this mountain, and pours its floods down on to the plains. Nor was this the worst we had to encounter, for occasionally the all but dry bed of a torrent cut across the road, when we had to descend into the gully by means of a sloping wall, something like that of a weir. Then, after pausing to take breath, the

ponies would make a violent rush up the opposite side: When not positively engaged in strife, we looked about us, down into many a moonlight abyss, and across to sharp-edged crags touched with silver. We had been eight hours *en route*, and it was very late when we reached our destination—the village of Rámling Pagoda.

Splendid was the scene upon which we gazed whilst taking our hasty supper in the travellers' bungalow—a house most happily placed upon the brow of a jutting plateau, which overlooks a profound valley, shaped like a horse-shoe, beyond which lofty cliffs appeared to rise, the stern barriers which have allowed no encroachment upon the great plains of central India, although their sides have been buffeted by the océan, and rent, and convulsed, and tormented, until one forgets that the highest tops of these great Western Ghâts are but on a level with the green fields of the Deccan. Nowhere are the peculiar characteristics which mark these steppes, these lofty ladders which lead up from the Concan, to be seen to greater advantage than from this spot. I had not enjoyed much rest during the night, for I could not resist rising to drink in the beauties of the solemn landscape.

It was still moonlight when I put together my few necessaries, and responded in person to

G——'s call: "The tea is ready, and the men want to put up the cups." I had a few minutes to spare, but I made no effort to see the village, although it is worthy of inspection, for it was G——'s intention to halt at the Rám Ghât for two or three days' sport on our return journey.

The Concan side of the mountain is so steep that horses cannot descend it; bullocks with pack-saddles, and natives, with their horny-soled feet and clinging toes, can alone get safely down this steep boulder-strown water-course, for the disused road (it was once the great road to Vingorla) is now little else, and the long stretches of almost perpendicular pavement, polished by a hundred monsoons, are dangerously slippery. We were therefore obliged to have recourse to the mancheel, the vehicle of the country. The mancheel is a light litter of rough sticks swung from a stout bamboo pole, with cross beams, which four men, two and two, support upon their heads, the pole so placed that, in order to be at ease, a recumbent position is necessary. It is no easy thing to pack oneself with grace into one of these machines. "Are you all right?" cried G——, perceiving that my efforts to wriggle myself into a comfortable position had ceased. "I should be so," I mournfully replied, "if you

could thrust my foot round on the other side of that bit of wood."

Our way lay through thick jungle, in the recesses of which lurk tigers and bison, panthers, wild cows, and all sorts of smaller game. I had no wish to catch sight of these lords of the jungle, my mind being set upon birds and flowers and monkeys. The heavy dew fell in showers.

The absolute silence which at first prevailed was very impressive, but when the high hills caught a rosy blush from the rising sun, the birds began to flutter and to pipe their matin song. These Indian feathered creatures sing very sweetly. Many a long, bag-like nest was suspended from the gnarled boughs, and now and then a bright-eyed monkey looked down upon us, pondering deeply upon the meaning of the procession. Still the woods were very lonely; no bright insect came humming by; Nature seemed to repose. It was a time for quiet thought. I lay back on my bier, and as G—— threw flowers and leaves upon me, my appearance must have been like that of a corpse on its way to interment. The spell, however, was soon broken. I was set down with a bump, and a sharp stone gave me a good rap on the back, which I felt through my plaid mattress.

Whilst the rough foresters rested, they chattered, and cracked jokes, oblivious of the presence of strangers. Perfect ease in the presence of a superior is a characteristic of the Hindoo. He addresses his native master with the utmost freedom. The status of each man is secured by his caste. Content with his social position, he is independent. He is free from the temptation of wishing to climb into a higher class of society, which is so grave a fault in our own national character. The low-caste man would be as indignant at the idea of dining with a Brahman as the latter would be if offered the meal even of a friend belonging to an inferior caste. Caste does not put a stop to all intercourse, for members of different castes may be great friends, although they may not eat or drink together or intermarry.*

G—— got from the elephant creepers some fine bunches of bloom, which gave forth a sweet perfume. It was not the season for such plants, but the great twisted stems coiled ser-

* The word "caste" is derived from the Portuguese, "gasta," a race. In Sanskrit, caste is termed varna, that is, colour, and from this term it may be concluded that the caste system had its origin in the difference of colour, between the Aryan colonists of Upper India and the aborigines whom they displaced."—MOOR'S *Hindoo Pantheon.*

pent-like round trees which were dying in their cruel embrace; and masses of long flowing tendrils told of the vigour and beauty they had attained during the rains. I recognised the sandal, the teak, the cotton-tree, and the shiny leaf and little white stars which studded the tender branches of the coffee shrub. The corinda bushes were flecked with white flowers, until they looked as if snow had fallen upon them. The purple-dusted berry, by which they are succeeded, is called the Indian damson. It was not the first time in this country that I had noticed the prevalence of certain colours at certain seasons. When I arrived in India, the gardens were all ablaze with crimson—during the rains, yellow prevails; and now, when rain had not fallen for months, tired Nature appeared to be capable of producing little else than white. Three months earlier, and the tangled thickets must have been lovely, but then fever, snakes, and noxious insects had been rife. I saw one tall tree, which bore a nut like a chestnut; the husk grew in blood-red clusters, and was thickly bristled with long, fine spikes. I never learnt what it was, but the name of many a tree we passed, if I had heard it, would have sounded in my ears like a household word.

We came upon some charming reaches of mountain scenery as we wound in and out, and rounded sharp spurs of rock, on one side rising in steep crags, on the other descending in a precipitous precipice. I heard the brawling of water, and looked down, in expectation of seeing a considerable stream, but only a silvery rill trickled along the deep bed of black rock worn by the floods of the monsoon. The only human beings we saw were the charcoal-burners, plying their trade. Cramped as was my position, I was sorry when three hours of trotting brought us to the bottom of the ghât. Múlés is a pretty and clean village, belonging, along with the surrounding territory, to a young native chief of some pretension—a boy, who is at present living with the young rajah of Kolhapur, and sharing his education. The thatched houses, each with a raised floor in front, were set about with curiously-shaped altars and sacred plants. The rich though tender green of the rice fields by which they were surrounded was quite dazzling, although the situation was probably very unhealthy. At this place we were to meet our bullock-cart, which, as we came up, stood waiting for us under a great shady Indian fig-tree. The patient cream-coloured bullocks were looking very handsome,

their ears having been slit up, so as to give them a resemblance to lotus flowers; and they had handsome brass collars round their necks.

Whilst the vehicle was being packed, I strayed about, and found a curious monumental stone under a peepul-tree. When we were again ready to start, I stood aghast when invited to get into the bullock-cart. It had a false bottom, where all the articles which could not be sat upon were stowed away. Our bedding was placed upon the top of it, and heaped up with pillows and bags, shawls, and odds and ends; the only way was to creep over the formidable barrier by the door, and then to burrow at full length. My head and G——'s feet were at the head of the vehicle.

"Just let me put these bundles upon you for a moment," said G——, "and then we shall get on better."

I was most uncomfortable. I attempted to sit up, and slipped down again directly. At last I bethought myself of the native posture, and gained a little relief by sitting in monkey-fashion, supporting my arms upon my knees, and flopping my hands helplessly in the air. Though now in the flat Concan, we did nothing but crawl up one side of an ascent, and

rush down the other. The bumping soon settled our arrangements by rattling us and our chattels each into its special hole, and resigning myself to the inevitable, I endeavoured to follow out G——'s advice—"Do not resist; let yourself go loose, like a camel, and you will get on much better." Once the bullocks refused to move on, and appeared to be in distress. "They smell a tiger," said our cowardly servant, his face assuming the hideous pallid hue peculiar to a black man in a fright.

It was pleasant, on reaching Betse, to find our midday meal neatly spread, and a friend standing ready to receive me—my own particular chair, a veteran, none the worse for having but one arm. I am apt to attach myself to inanimate objects.

We had no intention of venturing forth until evening, but in the afternoon an intelligent-looking young man came up, salaaming, and begged that G—— would come and see his school. G—— assented, and I took up my hat and followed. There were about fifty boys, but only one whose father was a cultivator, the others being the sons of petty traders. The greater number were Hindoos, with large soft eyes, and a good deal of quiet intelligence in them. I could have picked out the Mahomedan

boys by their sharp and somewhat cunning expression of face. There was a sprinkling of very little Christians, natives, with perhaps a dash of Portuguese blood in their veins. They were classed according to their attainments. The older pupils were poring over their Marathi books, the character or the letters of which I admired, being angular and decided. G—— desired some of them to read, and others to recite, which they did with facility, but in a nasal tone and monotonous manner. I was most interested in watching a juvenile class, who were learning to write short words, and to form letters upon sand. One little fellow executed his task very neatly, crumpling up his hand in an odd fashion, and making use of his middle finger.

The village of Betse is large and picturesque. It is placed in an irregular way under great limbed old trees, and with numbers of cattle about. The people appeared to be industrious and happy. Many were employed in making pack-saddles. One man was carefully shaping and stuffing the cornucopia-shaped bag which was to cover some animal's hump. This excrescence is sometimes ornamented with cockle-shells and cowries, and the drivers will wreath that of a pet animal with flowers. A large

stone cross, set upon steps, showed that the Portuguese Fathers had influence over the border. At a little distance from it rose a large square tomb, railed in, and in good condition. The inscription was to the effect that it was erected by brother-officers to the memory of a comrade, "Captain Taynton, who fell leading his skirmishers in action, near Betse, January 18th, 1815."

G—— had hoped to get a little fishing at this place, as there is an important stream in the neighbourhood; but, alas! the water was too low.

We were again packed into our vehicle, and off once more by three o'clock that night. We had several miles to go, and it was necessary to catch the turn of the tide, which was to float us down to Goa. At Assan-wáda, a little Portuguese town at the head of the estuary, the moonlight was as good as a cool sun, the jungle was deep, and the low branches swept over the bullock-cart like waves, and cast as much spray around. Were it not for these heavy dews all green things would perish. All was silent save for the bells of the long files of white bullocks, who came gliding by, followed by their drivers. These men have quick ears, and can tell in a moment if a beast has lingered or gone astray.

Their great packs were ostensibly laden with grain and tobacco, but they probably also contained lace, and chocolate, and arrack, which had never paid duty.

We had much difficulty in crossing the river. A considerable body of water, even in the present dry season, came pouring down from the mountains; during the rains it must have been a terrific torrent. Neither man nor beast can traverse it save in very dry seasons. Great smooth round stones were strown around in the utmost confusion, making the descent into the river's bed a matter of great difficulty, and there we stuck for a considerable time. After pushing and pulling and shouting for some time, the carriage reeled almost over, and got into a smoother channel. The scenery both up and down the stream was very pretty, but it was a little obscured by the clouds of steam which the rising sun drew up from the water. Past this spot the scene was dreary, for the woods were burnt in great patches. Some of the trunks, snapt in two, stood up charred ruins, others had fallen, and the red fire was still gnawing their great boles; others again were heaped about with the leaves and branches they had borne, only awaiting the kindling spark to be destroyed by their own offspring. The

huge teak-trees had been allowed to stand, but they were pitiable objects. They had been half hollowed, and their leaves, too precious to be burnt, were stacked in bundles at their roots. The leaf of the teak is used for thatching, and matting, and many other purposes. This is the native way of clearing the land on which they propose to grow some miserable crops of grain. Forest burning is a fruitful apple of discord in India.

We passed the low custom-house, which belonged to the young chief whose territory we had passed through, then crossed some half-mile of neutral ground, and drew up at the Portuguese frontier. A sentry was parading up and down before a range of warehouses, and some men were loitering about. No one took any notice of us, and we should have passed on at once, had it not been the wish of our driver to warm himself at a fire of blazing logs, which was very natural, as even we, who were well wrapped up, felt very chilly. We passed over a high-pitched bridge (we had not seen a bridge for months), with a shrine on each side, and entered the Portuguese territory. The scene was curiously changed. The wild jungles and the burnt forests were replaced by highly cultivated land, waving groves of the cocoa-nut

palm and betel palm, luxuriant bananas, and gardens full of orange-trees and vegetables. A wide stream meandered through fields brilliantly green with shooting rice. The rich vegetation was very pretty, but it did not give one the idea of being a healthy district. We were amused at the great pyramidal stones set upon platforms, with steps leading up to them. They were meant to indicate the distance, but the inscriptions were effaced by the frequent white-washings to which both Spaniards and Portuguese are so partial. They were evidently popular with the people, who clustered upon them for their matutinal gossip.

Presently we got upon swelling downs, bounded to the right by high red cliffs, while to the left we had a smiling landscape, out of which rose the blue mountains of Cannara. The original population of the country we were passing through were Canarese, whose language the Hindoo inhabitants still speak, as they do not understand Marathi. The wolds were thickly dotted over with large bushy trees, which bore tender green leaves, and a plentiful harvest of a most extraordinary-looking fruit, varying in colour from green to orange-red, which I can only describe by likening it to the pod of a good-sized capsicum, with a broad

bean set on the top of it. It was suspended from the tree by a long green thread. We stopped to gather one of these remarkable productions, the pod of which contained a quantity of somewhat acrid pulp. We threw the bean away, but afterwards found that it is considered the best part of the fruit. The tree proved to be a cojon, and very valuable. The pulp is made into a fine sort of arrack, which is said to be a valuable medicine in cases of asthma. The nut we despised fetches a high price, and is used all over India to flavour sweet things. Sometimes it is roasted, and served up at dessert, after the manner of chestnuts.

Assan-wáda is a good-sized and rather a pretty place, half town, half village. The bed of the little muddy river—an insignificant stream in hot weather—was exposed, as the tide was only just beginning to come up. I never learnt its name, but it rises in the Western Ghâts, about thirty miles away. Part of it flows into the creek, and part is directed into channels, through which it serves to irrigate a brilliant expanse of rice-fields. We had to descend at a villainous little inn, in front of which our worldly goods were stacked, the waggon having arrived the previous night; and such a vigilant eye was kept on our possessions,

that we only lost an Elkington fork and a shoe. We breakfasted in a dismal room, where half a comb, and a triangular bit of crooked looking-glass, were hung up for the benefit of travellers. A hen was busy hatching her eggs in a hole in the unplastered wall—and a very ungrateful hen she was, for she pecked us violently when we offered her bread crumbs. The landlady was a monster of fat, but she had apparently once been handsome. There was a most objectionable, wicked-looking girl, who, laughing and smoking in my face, was indignantly sent off by G——, and had her ears boxed in a dark corner by a savage-looking man.

We had to wait until there was enough water to float our galley, and amused ourselves meanwhile by the scenes in a small market, where baskets, stale fish, quantities of capsicums, and coarse hardware were sold. Nearly all the women wore the savi, but it was neither gracefully nor decently put on. These people being of mixed Indian and Portuguese blood, are called Urasians, or Mistici, and are said to inherit the evil qualities of each race. Another reason for their debased condition is the exceeding cheapness of toddy, which is a very fiery spirit. I am sorry to say that the appearance and demeanour of those whom we recognised to be

Christians was not more satisfactory than that of their heathen companions. These women wore small crosses of silver, which were attached to their necklaces. I walked some way along the long straggling main street, hoping to find the church, but was unsuccessful. The houses were stained with washes of various tints, pink appearing to be the favourite colour. I was struck by the absence of the shady verandah, but was afterwards told that the Portuguese have never been able to adopt the architecture of the country, or any of the native conveniences of the land in which they have settled, all that is not national with them being borrowed from the Italians.

CHAPTER XI.

Palm-trees—The Toddy Trade—Sport in Portuguese India—Monastic Establishment—Ruins of a Jesuit College—Relics of the Augustine Monastery—Goa—Palace of the Governor—Our New Quarters—Many-roofed Buildings—Interesting Relic of the Past—Churches in Panjim—Island of Goa—The Prison and Prisoners—Litters used in Goa.

THERE was a pleasant resting-place under some lofty palms, a semi-circle of stone seats being liberally ornamented with scrolls, and whitened to a pitch of perfection which was blinding. Close by, our lotus-eared bullocks, along with the less distinguished beasts which had drawn the cart, were munching hay, in company with the writer's tattoo, his master having arrived with the news that he had secured good accommodation for us at Goa. Assan-wáda owes its comparative prosperity to the toddy trade, all the young men in the place being apparently occupied in collecting

the juice for its preparation. Bearing a vessel like a watering-pot upon the arm, they mounted the trees with amazing skill and rapidity, by means of notches cut alternately on the opposite sides, the ascent being rendered easier by the rough nature of the fibrous cuticle which sheaths the cylindrical stem. The palm has no proper bark. The first human being I saw aloft I innocently mistook for a monkey. Twice each day are the pots fastened to the wounded bud, or branch, and emptied; the former for some time yields the most liquor, but the latter, if frequently pared, will continue to run for a year. Of course, no tree so bled will at the same time produce fruit. The process may be continued for two—even for three—years; but after that time the palm must either repose or die. Even when planted by the hand of man they require little care, but they do not bear for ten years, after which period they become taxable, and a great part of the revenue collected in the Portuguese settlement is derived from this source. The cocoa-nut palm will scarcely live out of the influence of the sea-breeze, flourishing most when washed by the soft spray, and loving to dip its roots into the waves. The nut, ensconced in its great fibrous husk, has been known to travel hundreds of miles by sea, and

then plant itself on some all but sterile island. It is often thrown on northern shores, where the cold alone prevents it from germinating; and these marine trips cause the natives of many coasts to believe that great forests of palms flourish in the depths of the ocean.

Our boat was about forty feet in length, and our crew consisted of four men and a boy, so that, with our five selves and the ducks—who, poor things, had just had a swim in fresh water—we were quite a large company. G—— and I occupied a palm-covered compartment, arranged like a divan, and we reclined at ease as we glided past the luxuriant gardens and rich palm-groves. Most of the trees upon the banks were young, and swept the water with their graceful, fan-like leaves.

The estuary soon widened; we hoisted a sail, and G—— got out his tackle to enjoy some sport. Alas! perfect felicity is not to be attained in this world, and great was his indignation when he discovered that his line, fresh from London, was rotten, and he had to give up the attempt. The shores, evidently swampy, were peopled with wild-fowl and other birds. The snipe-shooting here is said to be unrivalled, and there are partridge, quail, and florican in abundance. White storks rested on one leg, medi-

tating, or took a circling flight into the air; while lovely fly-catchers darted about, apparently pleased to keep us company, and clouds of shrieking green parrakeets flew over our heads. The river widened, and we lost sight of our feathered friends. Buffalo and tiger are to be found, but the English sportsman looks in vain for the white bear and the chamois, animals declared to be numerous in an official report on Portuguese India, published by the Bombay Government, upon the authority of a certain Captain Joaquim José Cicilia Kal.

The scenery shortly became quite lovely—villages nestling under the waving palms, and shrines and calvaries dotting the shores. Occasionally the stately trees were cleared away, and the steep banks were terraced up, to catch the rainfall, and some large, tasteless house, with steep-pitched roof, stood prominently forth. To the south, we occasionally obtained a glimpse of the Cannara hills, which rise near the coast, isolated masses of blue.

Keeping well to the right, we passed a large monastic establishment. Broad flights of steps, with curving balustrades, pierced in patterns, led up to the formal church. The churches in this settlement were built long after the Portuguese had departed from their fine old architec-

tural traditions. There are no modern ones of much merit; they are either built with a large façade, flanked by towers, ornamented with the scroll-work errors into which their designers were led by the facility of plaster, or they are of the style which some author aptly calls "the classically dull." A splendid banyan-tree, streaming with aerial roots, flung its great limbs over the water, and overshadowed us. To our dazzled eyes, its gloomy vault looked like a cave set with stalactites. Religious edifices were everywhere; brilliantly white, they specked the sea of verdure like distant ships with sunlit sails, and looked down at us from the cliffs, and as we floated along, we caught the chant of the choristers and the swell of the organ—sounds which lulled us into peaceful reverie, soon to be dispelled by the sight of some crumbling fort, which had guarded the stream well in the fierce days when the Hindoo had struggled against the Mahomedan—a period not more cruel than that which succeeded, when the iron arm of the Inquisition was stretched over the land.

As we neared our destination, the character of the architecture changed; the buildings appertained to an earlier and a purer age than

those we had seen. No stucco had disfigured the crumbling brick-work. There was a vast deserted nunnery, with falling terraces, standing at no great distance from the far-stretching ruins of the once celebrated Jesuit college, originally a small seminary, established for the linguistic education of native youths, who were destined for missionary labour. Ignatius Loyola's great disciple, afterwards canonized as St. Francis Xavier, was invited to take charge of it, but refusing to do this, he effected its transfer to the Society of Jesus, and called it the College of St. Paul. It rapidly became a place of great importance, and the huge pile of buildings, now so desolate, sprang up. There were long lines of roofless dormitories, chapels which still retained their high-pitched roofs, and ornamented iron-work, grand escutcheons surmounting the arched doorways and windowless halls, great courtyards and neglected pleasure-grounds. It had been a grand place in its day. It was abandoned even before the power of the Jesuits began to decay, in consequence of the malaria which haunts these smiling shores.

The tract of country which sloped from it appeared to be united by a valley to a ridge of blue hills, but the salt water really flowed be-

tween them, that line of blue being the Island of Goa.* We now entered what appeared to be a large lake, on the southern shore of which large isolated buildings rose out of the wood. One tall tower was a prominent object, and near it stood a single lofty pointed arch, which framed a portion of the fervid sky. These were the ruins of monastic Goa; the tower and arch were relics of the once famous Augustine monastery. Three miles to the west stands Panjim. The present Goa, as it is generally called, takes its name from a small river which forms a second estuary. We saw a long stretch of large, irregu-

* The first country of which the Portuguese obtained possession in Maharashtra was the important island on which stands the city of Goa, which belonged to the territory of Bijipur. The attack on Goa was suggested to Alphonzo de Albuquerque by the Hindoo pirate Timmojee, a native of Cannara. Goa was surprised, and surrendered on the 27th of February, 1510, but was retaken a few months after by Eusoof Adil Shah, in person. It was, however, again attacked in the fair season, and finally conquered by Albuquerque on the 25th of November, 1510, since which time it has remained in possession of the Portuguese. Before the arrival of the foreigners, the natives were, on account of its unhealthy position, beginning to abandon their city, and had already formed the nucleus of the present Old Goa, which became so famous under the Portuguese. Of the original settlement the only vestige is an ancient well, surrounded by a cluster of miserable huts.—See Mr. Grant Duff's *History of the Máhrattas.*

lar, gabled houses, pink, buff, and green, the whole looking very gay, and numbers of vessels were floating off the handsome quay, which runs the entire length of the town, the wavelets curling in the sun.

When we were fairly in the Rio, we perceived that many of these ships had high poops, and sterns richly carved, and even picked out with colour. There were also large barges heaped up with great konds of plantains, which would be allowed to ripen at their leisure. Others were stored with pyramids of water-melons, and a little further off were numbers of fishing-boats and canoes. It was a brisk and sparkling scene, revealing a number of medley scenes that it was not possible at first to realize in detail. We ran close to the great thoroughfare which skirts the Rio. The palace of the governor (no longer the richest and proudest of viceroys), built of fine white stone, brought from afar, looked exceedingly imposing, with great flights of steps down to the street, and two colossal female figures, carved and painted in glowing colours, standing sentinel on each side of the door. The sight of these figures carried my thoughts at once back to Spain, the land of Cono, and of wooden angels. Our six hours' voyage, all too short, was over; every moment we expected to

land, but the roof pointed out by the writer as the one which was to shelter us was quite at the extremity of the town. We turned a little to the left, and, behold, the glittering Arabian Sea lay stretched before us! At last we were carried from the boat, and dropped upon the hardest of sands. As soon as I could collect my scattered ideas, I began to pick up shells for the chicks at home, and lingered behind, in spite of G——, who was calling,

"Come along, come along! You will have plenty of time for collecting treasures later on."

Our house was nearly hidden by the high white walls which surrounded it. It almost stood upon the sands, but to reach it we were obliged to make a *détour*, and pass over a handsome high-pitched bridge, of three well-pointed arches, with statues, and inscriptions, and seats, all picked out in white and buff. It looked an absurdly large erection to span the small stream which trickled beneath it, but during the rains the river swells to a torrent. The monsoon breaks with fury upon the western coast. The average depth of rain which falls in Goa at this season is a hundred and thirty inches. We hurried on our way with mixed feelings. How pleasant it would be to have a refreshing bath, followed by luncheon; but what should we do if

the hostess we imagined should speak nothing but Portuguese?

We entered our new quarters through a lofty gateway, surmounted by a high black cross, and walked up an ornamental flight of steps. The place appeared to us a palace. We looked at each other in dismay. It was perfectly empty, containing only a single article which told of human occupation, and that was the nozzle of an old gingham umbrella, which protruded from a mysterious hole in the thick wall; and the only living creature to be seen about was a solitary sow, who had possession of a beautiful grove of young cocoa-nut trees at the back of the house. Nothing on that side was to be perceived over the lofty walls but great waving fans of green; but to the front we had a strip of steel blue sea, and a view of the stiff white fort which guarded the narrow entrance to the harbour. I consoled G—— with the reflection that we should do very well when our few possessions were collected and arranged, and we had got together the tables and chairs which the writer had promised to hire.

There was certainly no house in the place which afforded better accommodation than that which had been provided for us. The people

who visit Goa only put in for two or three hours, and live on board their vessels. I could not but smile when I called to mind my dread of a loquacious landlady. I had ample time before the arrival of our luncheon to examine all around. The rooms were long and lofty, the corridors were delightfully cool, and I found an old chapel, with an arched roof of finely sculptured stone. The tall windows, which opened like French windows, were made higher still by the fanlight above them; but there was no glare, for with the exception of a piece of glass not half a foot square in the centre of each, the light was admitted in a very subdued manner through thin square plates of mother-of-pearl, overlapping one another, and set between perpendicular bars of wood. Such is the fashion of Goa.

Then I went out under the palms, the stems of which were partly swathed up in what I, for the moment, imagined to be coarse canvas, but I soon found that it was of Nature's own weaving; and I marvelled over its evenness, and the regular recurrence of the one thick thread which strengthened the fabric. The palms were very lofty, and had long since cast off their swaddling clothes. Two or three large châteaux were set amidst them, chiefly remark-

able for their extraordinary high-pitched roofs, with square tops, and little pointed roofs, which, though of unequal girth, rose to the same level. Had not this uniformity as to height been insisted upon, the effect would have been infinitely picturesque. I afterwards found that the old Goanese considered a separate roof for every upper room the house contained to be in some manner advantageous. I have counted fourteen on one building. My first impression of Goa, and, I may add, my last, was that it was the queerest little corner of the earth that I had ever visited.

We had plenty to occupy us that afternoon—post-office work, leaving cards and letters of introduction, getting a supply of money, and informing ourselves as to the best manner of visiting Old Goa, which was nearly four miles off. Unfortunately the tide did not serve for the expedition, and had it done so we should have missed seeing the little outlying towns which fringe the shore. There was but one vehicle in the place—for the governor even had no equipage—and that was a very ancient moth-eaten cabriolet, with crazy wheels. The only horse in the city of Goa was out at grass, but could be caught if we so desired. A fabulous sum was

demanded for the use of this carriage, and we came to the conclusion that it would be much better not to make any arrangement until we had discussed the matter with our friends.

As we were wandering about, we came upon an interesting relic of the past. In the middle of a modern erection which bore a great resemblance to a band-stand, stood the celebrated statue of Alphonzo de Albuquerque, chiseled out of coarse brown stone. His hand was upon his dagger, and his legs were very far apart, the bulging sleeves of his doublet crossed and recrossed with braid. Every corner was set with a large jewel, and around his neck was a rich collar. Behind him was a splendid escutcheon in carved stone; and he looked upon a vane of precious marble, which contained his heart.

For a Portuguese town, there are remarkably few churches in Panjim. The principal one, which is called the Igreja (church) de Conceicaô, and is not at all interesting, stands half way up a steep hill, and, in order to reach it, we had to ascend a winding series of steps, evidently a copy of those in Rome which lead from the Piazza di Spagna to the Trinita dei Monti. The only building in the place which appeared to have any claim to antiquity was a long barn-like erection which stood upon the

summit of the hill. It might either have been part of a fort or of some religious establishment. The door was locked, but through the low arched windows we obtained a good view of its interior. At one end there stood an altar, and the flooring was composed of flat stones, regularly shaped, but irregular in size. It was, in fact, the burial-place, long ago accorded to such inhabitants of the town as could afford to pay year after year for the little space they occupied; but as soon as the annual sum ceased to be given, the bones of the forgotten dead were cast forth, and carelessly thrown down in the vicinity of the edifice.

We at first imagined that the exterior ground was a cemetery, which was in the act of being removed, for there lay heaps of coffins, many of them broken up, but not decayed—innumerable bones, skulls, to which patches of hair were attached, and—saddest sight of all—in one corner a pile of tiny coffins, black and grey, and some that had once been white. We thought of plague and cholera (not as yet being converts to the germ theory), and got away with all speed. We were afterwards told that some of the memorial stones in the building were of considerable age, the ground where certain of their ancestors lay buried

being still rented by noble families in the mother country. The friends with whom we afterwards made acquaintance, had formerly had a two years' tenure of a grave, in which they had buried a little daughter, but the remains had been taken up and sent over the sea to a family chapel in some old Portuguese church.

We hurried on to a spot which commanded a complete view of the town, with its long quay, its large dull squares surrounded by formal two-storied houses, and its ramifications of suburban-looking streets, all built in curves, according to the fashion of Spain. We also obtained a charming view of the busy Rio de Goa, seeing to advantage where its two great arms branched off, one of them forming the estuary which we had descended, the other that which flows into the river Panjim.

The island of Goa is entirely surrounded by salt water, and is the largest of the twenty islands which are sprinkled over the Goanese territory. On the shore opposite Panjim a long and beautiful village stretched away under the palms, a pretty place, which we were afterwards desirous of visiting, but were unable to do so, the time at our disposal being limited. It is

not very safe to cross the lower part of the Rio at ebb tide.

Returning home to our palace alongside of the water, we passed the prison. What accommodation there might be in the rear, I know not, but its front was like that of the ordinary houses, excepting that heads clustered behind the bars of the windowless apertures. At any rate, the bright eyes which peered between them had the pleasure of gazing upon a charming prospect. We were interested in the proceedings of these prisoners, some of whom were drawing up small parcels, others dangling ropes, from which were suspended various articles for sale—many sorts of brushes, basket-work, cigar-cases made of fine grass, or beads, hats of palm-fibre, wooden toys, and many other commodities. A prisoner is under no circumstances allowed to die of starvation, but his prison allowance is very small, and he is expected to supplement the poor diet he can procure by extras paid for by the money gained by the sale of his handiwork. The term of a man's imprisonment does not entirely depend upon the length of his sentence. If the place be not inconveniently full, he is, in spite of his remonstrances, kept in until some friend has

influence to obtain his release (perhaps the jailor may draw a certain profit from the articles sold, and wish to have his premises comfortable). On the other hand, a culprit who is able to command a little interest, is often released before the proper time has expired. The friend who informed us of these facts stated that "a rascally clerk of his had been in for a long time, but that when he had a moment to spare he would go down and get him released."

We dined upon fish. The pomphlets were excellent, far better than those we had eaten in Bombay. We had also grey mullet, and slices of a large fish called a mahsir, along with prawns, cockles, and a pretty little shell-fish, a biral. Goa is celebrated for its oysters, but they were not at this time in season.

We were too much fatigued even to wander upon the sands, but we sat under our portico in a state of beatitude, revelling in the fresh sea breeze, looking up into the sky, where the full moon floated serenely, and then over the sea, where the waves were dancing. The silvery light illuminated the long corridor, save where the black shadows fell, but where were the proud priests, the knights, and the ladies who had once swept through the silent halls? In the early morning we had a delightful stroll

upon the sands, and observed that the scattered rocks were wonderfully pierced in all directions by borers. The Rambla, or Corso, running along the shore, was shaded by palms, under which were semi-circular seats, with stone tables, but it had not the air of being the liveliest place in the world.

We had scarcely finished our breakfast when Mr. M—— walked in. I was about to call him our English friend, but that would scarcely be correct. His parents were Irish, but he was himself born in Norway, and educated in New York. He had lived in China, Japan, and Australia, and had ploughed the European seas in command of his own vessels. For the present he was settled upon a large estate, forty miles south of Panjim. Our friend laughed at the idea of our hiring the worn-out cabriolet and the purblind steed. Everyone went about in mancheels, and we must do the same (he was a positive old gentleman). Madame would place her own at my disposal, and for G—— he would hire one, along with bearers. He declared that it was too late in the day to visit Old Goa, which was a feverish, unhealthy place, and he advised us, if we went there, to make the excursion in the very early hours. Meanwhile we could make an expedition to a vice-

regal palace, with large tanks, which he considered well worth seeing. We assented to the proposition, and he took leave, inviting us to spend the evening at his house, and meet the governor's military secretary, on whom we had left cards and a letter of introduction. Our new acquaintance spoke English in a very precise, old-fashioned manner.

The advent of the mancheels was heralded by the arrival of eight little blue petticoats. I speculated deeply as to the probable use of these curious articles. Was Monsieur about to enliven our palace by getting up some native dance in our honour? The petticoats, however, turned out to be the liveries of our eight bearers —*the* thing in Goa! I looked with an eye of contempt upon G——'s litter; although it was handsomely carved, mine was of a superior order. It was in the shape of a canoe, made of mahogany and cane, with a comfortable arm-chair at each end. It was made to carry double. But our mancheels had sails, the purpose of which I could not divine. I was enlightened when a rope was put into each hand, and I was told first to raise it into a horizontal position, and then to manœuvre it so as to protect myself from the sun and wind. I nearly came to grief in passing under the archway;

but that was the consequence of looking round in order to see how G—— was getting on. The motion was delightfully easy, and we trotted gaily along the sands, almost in the waves.

We came in a short time to another and more important fort than that with which we were acquainted, backed by a tall lighthouse. On one side the great green heaving plain of sea, the Arabian Ocean, melted into the horizon; on the other tall palms extended in a curved line to the point of rock we were about to visit. We stopped for a few minutes in order to watch a number of fishermen, some on the shore, others in boats, who were hauling in a prodigiously large net. We should have been interested in seeing the result of their efforts, but the process promised to be a long one, and we went on our way. On nearing our destination we turned inland, and mounted a steep hill, capped by a pretty village. Here my eight bearers halted for a few minutes, and refreshed themselves with twopence halfpenny worth of toddy and water. We soon afterwards came to an ornamental archway, which, in addition to the usual balustrade, was ornamented by two gigantic urns of classic shape, with tall flowers issuing from them. Ah! so white that one's eyes were dazzled!

The undulating stretch of land upon which we now entered was richly clothed with superb old mango-trees, with gnarled and far-spreading horizontal boughs. The Goa mangoes are celebrated for their deep golden colour and high flavour; like the cocoa-nut palm, it loves the salt-sea spray, and is never to be found in perfection inland. Wherever there was a break in the foliage, the sleepy ocean was disclosed, for it washed three sides of this lovely park. Would that, collected together, we could have spent a lazy month in this charming spot!

The irregular old buff and white palace stood in an old-fashioned, but somewhat neglected garden, full of common flowers. The large airy chambers in the interior carried my thoughts away to many an old English house or cottage. There were the four-post beds, the old cabinets set with china jars, the chairs and tables of true Chippendale form. Mahogany furniture, such as we had here, is the spécialité of the Madras Presidency. There is nothing Indian in the style, and I think that it must have owed its origin in this country to European originals, brought over the water, and dear to the heart of some exile.

The only thing really worth looking at in

the palace was some beautiful cinque-cento wood carving in the chapel, borrowed from Italy; but even there this style of art is now carried out only at Sienna, where the most beautiful arabesques in low relief retain their original hue, and rise from a ground of pin-spotted gold. In this instance the Portuguese, in accordance with their intense appreciation of colour, had gilded the patterns, and painted the rough ground-work red.

We were then conducted to the tanks, which opened upon a paved court, and were large in proportion to the dimensions of the palace; but they were not quite so fine as those at Carthage, which have spoiled all tanks to me for the rest of my life. We visited a small stable, where some animals were sociably munching their hay. There was a beautiful nilgye, a kind of antelope, the sight of which made G——'s eyes glisten when he saw it. "The nilgye affords noble sport." How cruel men are! A small wild cow, with a yellow tail, regarded us fiercely, for she came of an untameable race; and there was a very pretty cheeta, with a ruddy brown skin spotted with white.

On our way one day, we went along a charming forest glade, with a distant vista of the sea, white and hazy in the bright sunshine,

and were set down before what our guide, the gardener, called the English cemetery. This was puzzling, as there are no English residents in Goa. It was a large square, enclosed by high walls, most charmingly kept, and shaded by beautiful trees. Alas! the key of the great iron gates, set in a lofty archway, was not forthcoming; but we looked through the bars, and even mounted up a small ladder, in order to obtain a better view of the place. There was a considerable number of tabular tombs, apparently without inscriptions, and there was nothing to indicate their probable age. Snow might have fallen upon the slabs, they were so purely white, but the record of those who slept beneath was effaced by the corroding hand of time.

We questioned Monsieur Albuquerque respecting this burial-ground, and he told us that they take the greatest care of it, because there lie in it men whom England sent to succour them in time of trouble. I did not learn as much as I should have wished to do respecting the troops who were sent hither. A force, I knew, was sent to help the Portuguese at the end of the last century, when their territories were threatened by the neighbouring chiefs of the Concan, and such was again the

case about the year 1821, when the Sawant Hadi rebels rose; but my history is at fault, and I cannot call to mind if England sent any particular force to prevent the French from taking Goa (which they had often threatened to do) during the Peninsular War.

CHAPTER XII.

Native Population in Goa—The Portuguese Military Secretary—Cultivation of Coffee—Uses of the Palm-tree—Discovery of a Petrified Forest—St. Francis Xavier in Goa—Politeness of the Goanese—Revenue from Salt—Ribendir—Mother-of-pearl Windows—Ruins of Old Goa—Statues of Cedar-wood, &c.—Bon Jésu—Shrine of St. Francis—Remains of Antiquity—The Cathedral—Churches and Monasteries.

TO vary the way, we returned through the country, which was fertile and pretty. Here and there the palm forests had given way to fields with crops of sugar-cane, tobacco, plantain-trees, and melon-beds. We passed through a large and picturesque Hindoo village, a pleasant place. The preponderance of the native population in the Goa territory is Hindoo, and not Mahomedan, which is curious, as this part of the Malabar coast is said to have been inhabited, when conquered by the Portuguese, by an Arabic people. The native Christian

population in India numbers about one million and a quarter, the greater part of whom are Roman Catholics, who owe allegiance to the Archbishop of Goa. Our bearers did their work gallantly, trotting their six miles out in fifty minutes, and returning in the same time. Scarcely a movement was perceptible in their bronze bodies, the motion being almost entirely from the hip.

When on an excursion, there is no harder work than to dress for a party, but *noblesse oblige;* and in this instance we were rewarded for our pains by passing a very pleasant evening in the society of intelligent people, whose ideas ran in quite a different groove from our own. With old-fashioned politeness, Mr. M—— was at the bottom of the stairs, ready to pilot me to the honourable corner of the sofa. Madame was delightful, combining with the softest manners the originality of a well-bred American lady, a class which my countrywomen are slow to acknowledge, but which, nevertheless, exists. We were introduced to Monsieur A——, the military secretary, himself a Portuguese, but his wife American. The appearance and manner of the former were such that, had I not known his nationality, I should have taken him to be an Englishman. He spoke

our language well, though certainly with quite a foreign accent. As I can say nothing that is not in praise of this gentleman, I may be excused for mentioning his rather sonorous name —Jeronimo Osoria de Castro Cabral di Albuquerque, and for stating that he was descended from the old warrior with the stern face and the jewelled sleeves. Monsieur Alberk, as we were told to pronounce his final name, and G——, soon plunged into a discourse touching the military affairs of their respective countries, which lasted nearly the whole evening.

Meanwhile I endeavoured to gather some hints respecting the old town we were to visit on the morrow, but the party were evidently not of an antiquarian turn of mind. Madame had visited Old Goa but once during the eleven years which she had passed in its vicinity, and remembered nothing but the heat and the bad headache which she had brought away from it. Everyone, including Mr. A——, appeared to have a horror of the place, of its history, its monastic establishments, even of its churches, which they hoped to see razed from the ground. I could not agree with such a desire, and therefore turned the conversation to a more popular subject—Mr. M——'s estate. Would that we could have accepted his cordial invitation to

visit it. It was about forty miles from Panjim. He had eighty acres under cultivation, which produced palms, coffee, and cotton. With regard to the latter he had entirely given up sowing exotic seed, and raised the cotton-shrub, or bush,* which, like the smaller plant, produces a small yellow flower. His coffee-trees appeared to give him the most trouble and anxiety. The pips will not germinate unless sown exactly at the right time; and if an error of twenty-four hours is made, the seed comes to nothing. The preparation of the berry, too, is troublesome. It has three envelopes—the pulp, the fibre, and the parchment, which must be removed with care. A coffee shrub remains in full vigour for three years only. Such a plantation must be a very pretty sight, the leaf is so glossy and green, and the little white blossom so simple. The berry, when ripe, presents a rich appearance, studding the tender twigs something after the manner of our own

* The Sheikh of Biskra, at whose invitation we visited some of the oases of date-palms in the Sahara, reckoned that, if sold, each tree brought him in five francs annually—perhaps more, if disposed of by barter, which is the usual mode. He told us also that at the top of almost every date palm, a mouse's nest is to be found, in which at least a couple of pounds of the best fruit is sure to be stowed away.

holly, though the colour is less brilliant, being more orange than scarlet.

Our host evidently liked his palms the best. Some he let out for lopping; those he retained in his own hands he kept for the sake of the fibre and the nut. A portion of the latter he sold for fruit, the rest he broke up and exposed to the sun for three days, at the end of which time all the oil was exuded. The refuse, which he called cerpera, is pressed into oil-cake, and shipped abroad—principally to England. Little or no machinery appears to be used. He considered that each palm brought him in a yearly profit of four shillings.

How wonderful is this tree, which alone is capable of supplying the necessaries of life to the native of the shores on which it grows! When fresh, its juice is nutritious and wholesome, and after fermentation, if not abused, it is excellent medicinally. Its nut supplies solid food, upon which cattle can be reared, and the uses of the oil it yields are numberless. Its pith, although inferior in quality to that of the sago palm, is capable of being made into a coarse sort of flour. The black man builds the frame of his hut with its wood, roofs it with the leaves, and wattles it in with the branches, binding all firmly together with its fibre, of

which he also makes his fishing-nets—nay, more, it provides luxuries, for in some countries the people make ornamental coverings of its canvas, which they stamp with patterns, and embroider with fine threads coloured. Then, how ancient is the palm!—in what remote ages did it decorate our globe!

I was much interested in hearing of the recent discovery of a petrified forest, which had been made close to Mr. M——'s estate. He lent me a little pamphlet—a lecture that had been delivered in Bombay on the subject, which was so curious that I made an abstract from it.*

* "An interesting discovery of a petrified forest several miles in extent has lately been made on the western coast, near Goa. The geological formation of that part is granite covered with thick layers of laterite and trappite. The stems of the trees lie immediately over the granite, imbedded in laterite, and covered in places by thick layers of recent formation. A great portion of the trunks belong to the monocotyledons, but a smaller number to the coniferæ. Many of the trees bear evident traces of the instruments used for cutting them down; some of the larger have incisions more or less deep on their sides, and some of the smaller present a clean cut surface at their extremities, produced evidently by sharp-cutting instruments. Dr. Marchesetti was fortunate enough to find, too, a wedge-shaped piece of petrified wood, which had been cut out of a small tree. The instruments used must have been of metal, and the blows made with considerable skill. Dr. Marchesetti cannot determine the age of this fossil forest, but points out that

We took leave of our friends, promising to dine with them the following day at five o'clock, an hour all too early, but quite fashionable for Panjim. Before going to rest we put all in readiness for the morrow's pilgrimage to the shrine of India's great apostle. St. Francis Xavier arrived in Goa at the close of the year 1542. His first night in the island was spent in prayer in one of the churches—most probably the cathedral. It is recorded that he was greatly distressed at finding the Portuguese

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there can be no doubt of its great antiquity, considering the complete petrifaction of the wood, and that it is overlaid in some places with strata of trappite and laterite. Trappite being a volcanic product, it must have been deposited whilst volcanic action was still prevalent in this region; and it is known that it is a very long period since there were signs of volcanic activity in the Western Ghâts. Dr. H. V. Carter, speaking of this country, says:—

"'Sufficient time has elapsed since the last of its effusions were poured forth to weather down its cones, efface its craters, dissipate its scoriæ, break up its plains, and transform its surface to such an extent that from an arid black volcanic waste it has become a tract of mountains, hills, and valleys, covered with verdure and cultivation.'

"Dr. Marchesetti, therefore, attributes a very high antiquity to the forest, and considers that the evidence in the cuttings of the trunks justifies him in saying that the Southern Concan was then inhabited by a civilized people." —*From a paper read by* DR. MARCHESETTI *at the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1876.

plunged in all the excesses of luxury and wickedness. Although without doubt a most conscientious man, and a devoted missionary, Xavier's mode of converting the heathen shows him to have been unenlightened and superstitious. In one of his letters to a friend he says, "I am wholly ignorant of the language of the people, and they understand as little of mine, and I have no interpreter. All I can do is to baptise children and serve the sick." How curious is this when we remember that the knowledge of languages was considered so essential to the teaching of the apostles as to be miraculously conferred upon them! Xavier commenced his labours on the coast of Cape Comorin. Having committed to memory the translation of a certain formula, he went round with a bell, collected the people, and repeating the words as well as he could, baptised them, and with an exhortation to them to teach others, he took his departure for another place. He thus spent fifteen months among thirty villages, formed many congregations, and built several small churches, appointing the best of those whom he called converts to the office of catechists, and obtaining provision for them out of the public treasury. Subsequently Xavier went to Travancore, and as the Portuguese had

requested the Rajah to allow it, he baptised in one month three thousand people.

John the Second of Portugal, writing to the Archbishop of Goa, lays down in a letter, dated 1546, the principle "that pagans may be brought over to our religion, not only by the hope of eternal salvation, but by the hope of temporal interest and preferment." And he goes on to direct that on professing Christianity "they were to be provided with places in the customs, to be exempted from impressment in the navy, and sustained by the distribution of rice out of the public revenue."

There were, however, thousands of poor people whom these benefits could not reach, and numbers of these were induced by their heathen rulers to offer themselves for baptism, in hopes of gain, and to repeat the formulæ, which they did not understand. The method employed by Xavier in teaching was well calculated to propitiate the natives. Although ignorant as to the significance of the water sprinkled upon them at baptism, it was natural they should imagine that the employment of the element which was necessary to the proper performance of their own daily routine of religious duty could not harm them; and as for

the bell by which Xavier collected them together, the sound of it was also essential at their own holy ceremonies.*

The shores of the Gulf of Manar, better known as the pearl-fishery coast, was the principal scene of the labours of St. Francis. There he is said to have converted no fewer than 500,000 idolaters. But this good man was, it appears, not altogether satisfied with the result of his mission. A Spanish Jesuit writes thus: "Xavier soon discovered in the manners and prejudices of the natives an insurmountable bar to the progress of Christianity among them, as appears from the printed letters which he wrote to Ignatius Loyola, his superior. At last Francis Xavier, entirely disheartened by the invincible obstacles by which he was everywhere met in his apostolic career, and by the impossibility of making real converts, left the country in disgust, after a stay of two or three

* "The bell is rung at certain times to scare away evil spirits, which was probably the origin of its adoption in the West. Bells are much used about Hindoo temples, but rejected by Mahomedans, by order of the prophet, who deemed them relics of superstition. Those used by the Hindoos differed according to the deity in whose honour puji is performed."—MOOR'S *Hindoo Pantheon.*—Bells were also rung in the temples, in order to awake the attention of the deity.

years,* taking his departure for still more distant regions.

In the year 1552 he succumbed to the fatigue and exhaustion caused by his constant labours, and on his death was interred in the town of Malacca, where his remains rested for two years, after which they were transported to Goa, placed in a coffin of embossed silver, and for upwards of two hundred years exposed to the gaze and adoration of the people. It was not until the year 1780 that they were locked up in the shrine that we were about to visit. Miracles are declared to have been worked wherever the body of the saint rested, and continue to be worked, it is asserted, up to the present time. Some of the stories are amusing, but I will not sully the memory of this great but somewhat mistaken man by repeating them.

I was stirring early in the morning, before I could well tell a white thread from a black one, and we were off whilst the air was still misty and grey. Never was there a town, no, not even in Ireland, so teeming with pigs and dogs. The former were large, long-legged, starved-looking creatures, the scavengers of the place. As for the dogs, they were everywhere. I

* "Land of the Veda," p. 338.

counted eighteen in a knot, some lying comfortably under a tree, yapping at flies, and disporting themselves in a lazy fashion; others occupied the middle of the streets, in which our bearers turned aside, to suit their convenience.

The Goanese, who are wide awake, are the most polite people I ever met with. Every man, every boy, who owned a covering to his head, removed it, and muttered good wishes as we passed along. G—— got tired of wagging his head in reply to their salutations, but although my neck ached, I returned the salutes, for the honour of the family. We came to the conclusion that there must be some large Roman Catholic seminary in the neighbourhood, for we met numbers of priests.

A fine causeway, with stone parapets, two miles in length, connects Panjim with the outlying towns of Ribander and Chardo. It was a pity that there were no horses in the town, for it would have been a charming place for a gallop. The embankment is pierced with small tunnels, in order to allow the sea-water to flow freely into the large lagoon which penetrates inland. The tide was out when we were there, and the expanse exposed had the dreary appearance of all salt-making districts, with their

muddy pans and dirty white hillocks. This abundance of salt is a great source of wealth to the country. A large export duty is raised from it; but although the Portuguese carefully guard, by sea and land, a hundred miles of territory, it is computed that they lose a lakh of rupees (£10,000) yearly by the smuggling of salt alone. Our hands were not altogether clean with regard to this article, for the puttah-wallee showed us in triumph half a sack full of it, which he had bought to take home, having got it for a fourth of the sum he would have paid in Belgaum, in which district the people complain grievously of the high price of this most necessary commodity. As our bearers required a short rest, we alighted at Ribander, and stalking about, collected several little sheets of highly iridescent mother-of-pearl, which had fallen from the windows of a ruined vice-regal palace. Such windows are still in use all over the settlement, and we saw great heaps of the very large oyster-shells from which the pearl is cut. It is quite a branch of trade in the villages near the coast, and, to my surprise, I afterwards found that, even in the fort of Belgaum, there were buildings in which the fashion could be traced.

Ribander was a good-sized place, with great

gabled houses, painted pink and green, and with tiled roofs of various shapes; but the once gay place is falling to decay, for the district is fever-stricken. A flight of handsome steps, with arch-way and pillars, gnawed by time, but white, like an ancient beauty smeared with pearl-powder, led to a small pier, off which, in by-gone days, many a carved and gilded galley had floated. The church was large, *plaster*esque, and uninteresting, but in front of it there stood a fine figure in wood of the Blessed Virgin, arrayed, according to the law promulgated by the Inquisition, in robes of white and blue, which carefully concealed her feet. The image is placed between two tall masts, to which some legend of shipwreck is attached. A few priests, one nun, and their servitors, are now the sole inhabitants of Old Goa, but the numerous churches, the solitary towers, the heaps of ruins which rise from the thorny jungle, teeming with poisonous plants and deadly reptiles, and reeking with malaria, bear silent witness to the splendour it had once attained. Cruel and remorseless in its prosperity, it seems still a vice-haunted spot, upon which one cannot look without rejoicing at its desolation. My knowledge of Spain, and its architecture, which is essentially the same as that of Portugal, enabled me

to make the best use of my time in this decaying spot. According to all accounts, a few years have greatly changed the state of its buildings. A few more, and they may have ceased to exist. The churches are quickly seen, there being little to strike one in their great vaulted interiors. There are no pictures worth anything in an artistic sense, no organ-cases with folding doors, such as the greatest painters loved to decorate, no vessels of virgin gold, no relics so sacred that it is only upon our knees that we might be permitted to look upon them. If these things had ever been, they were gone, and had left no trace behind. Still there were the statues of cedar and of tuya wood, enduring as marble, and carving as delicate as lace, which it was a pity to see gilded and painted. The great figures of Christ crucified were too real, too agonized, to allow one to indulge in the calm thoughts with which such an object should be regarded. These figures were bound round the body with rich fringed scarfs of satin, or dressed out in petticoats of crimson velvet, as in the mother country the figure of Christ is always draped. There also was the familiar gigantic figure of St. Christopher, staff in hand, wading through the troubled waters with the glorified child upon his shoulder. He who looks

upon this representation, and mutters a prayer, will, it is asserted, not die by a violent death that day. There were figures of saints, and angels with feathery wings, some of them nobly sculptured, and small ivory crucifixes, worthy of Cano. With these exceptions, the churches in Goa are only interesting in an historical point of view.

We were set down at the entrance of the Bon Jésu, the exterior of which, covered with stucco, had nothing but size to recommend it, the length in particular being very great. The interior is well-proportioned and impressive, built in the form of a cross. We at once sought out the shrine of St. Francis, which we found to be truly magnificent, without any superabundance of ornament. The coffer, which contains the silver coffin and the body of the saint, is of copper gilt, and is pierced in arabesque patterns, which are delicately embossed and wrought, standing out in relief against a red ground, possibly of enamel. But, great is the pity, the shrine is enclosed within four walls, and only just sufficient space is left to allow the visitor to pass round it. The small amount of light which is allowed to penetrate is admitted through the doorway, an arrangement, no doubt, made for the sake of entrance fees, and to

render necessary the numerous candles with which the Roman Catholic devotees light it up. The coffer is placed upon a catafalque composed of the richest marble, and around it, in basso-rilievo, in bronze, are pictured the most prominent events in the life of the saint. The scene at one end of the catafalque represents the missionary standing on the sea-shore baptising the natives, who flock towards him. At the other, Xavier is seen stretched upon a pallet under the shelter of a wigwam. Holding forth the crucifix with one hand, he extends the other, in order to bless the sorrowing Indians who crowd around him. This truly superb shrine was made in Italy, and was the gift of one of the Queens of Portugal.

In this church of the Bon Jésu we came upon another interesting relic. It was placed against the wall, and consisted of four plaques about a foot square, on which, in *repoussé*, was represented the exploits of some sea-captain who had commanded one of the fleets of Vasco de Gama. The date was the end of the fifteenth century, but the particular year we were unable to decipher, though the name of Cochin was introduced into the Portuguese inscription. A fleet of galleys, high out of the water, with bulging sails, and smaller vessels, with lateen

sails, were surging through the waves towards a battlemented castle, one of them having approached so near that its crew were attempting to place a ladder and scale the walls. In another compartment a company of knights were standing in front of a band of natives, who carried long sticks, and were assailing them with stones. In a third, the Portuguese were charging men mounted upon a row of elephants. In the fourth, which concluded the history, the subdued Indians were bowing down under the palm trees before their conquerors. The vast mouldy sacristy contained some splendid old chests, very early specimens of inlaid work, probably made of teak, and the patterns traced in some darker wood. They were bound with finely-worked iron clamps, and ornamented with bosses of the same metal; but where were the splendid vestments which they had once contained? Cabinets in the same style, with small drawers, which had possibly once been full of church millinery, were placed against the wall, with the names of many long-dead Josés and Gonsalvos, and many others, over them.

In the Jésu, which is the most interesting edifice in the place, the few ecclesiastics still attached to it mumble the service twice a day;

but unless a fever-stricken peasant or a few old pensioners creep in, they have no congregation; and no doubt when the present members of the establishment die off it will cease to exist.

The cathedral, which would be considered a fine building in any European town, is two hundred feet long, but the roof is flat, out of proportion, low, and mapped out in panels, with pictures from Bible history, the colouring very rich. The entablature over the high altar was a mass of carving and gilding, rising to the very ceiling, with some lamps in massive silver, which I greatly admired, swinging before it. The pavement was almost entirely composed of memorial stones, beneath which crumbled many a cruel priest and stern warrior. In our progress through the cathedral we necessarily trod on cardinals' hats and grand escutcheons, and lent our aid to Father Time to help him to obliterate many a famous name. Here also there is service twice a day, but no congregation.

Adjoining the cathedral is the Aljura, or Archbishop's prison for refractory monks, the cells of which were light and airy, and save a few ominous iron rings projecting from the walls, there was nothing to tell that they had

ever been occupied by any but the devout and the studious. In the curious old church of the Franciscans, the cloisters were hung with pictures, which, though great daubs, were old and interesting, as they represented the adventures of the five Franciscan missionaries who, in the year 1502, accompanied Vasco de Gama's second fleet to India. A hat, blessed by the Holy Father himself, was placed upon the head of Cabral, their unscrupulous leader. The Franciscans troubled themselves little with the spiritual welfare of the Hindoos, their time being occupied by cruel intrigues against the unsuspecting Christians of the Syrian church, who had long been settled upon the western coast of India, and who had received the Franciscans with the utmost cordiality as Christian brethren, although attached to a different order from their own.

One of the pictures represents Cabral kneeling to receive his hat; another, his arrival at Cochin, where the Syrian Christians sent a deputation on board his ship, beseeching him to take them under his protection, and begging him to accept an ornamental staff. We then see the Franciscans labouring to convert the heathen, and the different castes of Hindoos are portrayed with singular fidelity.

A large monastery, attached to this church,

is still inhabited by a few monks. We were allowed to walk through the cheerful corridors upon which the cells opened, and even to step into some of these retreats—pleasant rooms, with seats in the deep windows, and little ornamented niches, for crucifix or book, overlooking a broad terrace and neglected garden, beyond which lay the sleepy blue sea, and more distant hills, with feathery palm forests, stretching down to the water—a lovely and peaceful scene. The love of the monks for colour was shown in the broad wooden door-sills painted in stripes of metallic green, cobalt blue, and deep red.

By this time we began to be a little tired; our attention was fatigued, and we struck out of our list one or two places that we had intended to visit; but we decided on going over the church and monastery of the Dominicans, a vast pile under reparation, and not one day too soon, for the thick walls were cracked, probably the result of earthquakes, and the dormitories admitted the rain and the birds. The whole place smelt of bats, no pleasant odour, and there they were, hooked up to many a beam and tattered curtain. In a large mortuary chapel some of the tablets were in a sad condition, having fallen from the walls, exposing

black cavities and mouldering bones. We inquired, but in vain, for a fine library which we had been led to believe existed in this establishment; but a big, sour-looking brother denied all knowledge of it.

After this, we proceeded to the Convent of St. Monica, which at one time was famous for the excellence of its dried fruits. We found the place, but were informed that there was only one nun in it. As it appeared, however, that this solitary representative of her order had two-and-twenty lay sisters to wait upon her, we had still hopes of seeing her, and procuring from her the sweetmeats which were coveted by M. We passed into the convent, and upstairs into a kind of ante-chamber, where a bulky priest sat at a table, counting a great heap of silver money, and receiving reports from two men, who looked like stewards. We were offered seats, which were placed in front of a large grille that divided us from a second chamber. Behind this grille stood the nun, a tall, stout woman, in the habit of her order, to whom we stated our wishes, and the object of our visit. She informed us that confections such as those which we desired were no longer made at the convent, but that certain parts of mango and guava were at our service if we re-

quired them. She sent a couple of lay sisters to procure samples, and with a civil inclination of the head, returned to her employment, which was also that of counting coins, handed to her through a small wicket in the grating. Much depended upon the life of this elderly lady, the last of her race, for upon her decease, with the exception of a sum sufficient to keep the buildings in tolerable repair, the establishment would collapse, and its revenues become the property of the Portuguese Government. The handmaids were long, and I, too, began to handle the small thick Goanese rupees, and G—— got the priest to let me have, in exchange for British rupees, three upon which I fixed my affections. They bore the effigies of Portuguese sovereigns, the royal arms, a number of castles upon the reverse side, and the earliest bore the date of 1772.

When the tardy damsels returned, we bought some grey paste, which tasted like dust and ashes, along with a very useless rosary, made of glass, silk, and silver filigree, and shaking hands with the priest, retired. Judging from the great extent of its ruins, the monastery of the Augustines was the largest and most splendid building in the place, but with the exception of the tall square tower which we

had first seen from the water it is completely gutted. Here and there an arch still standing, marks where the cloisters once were; and from one solitary shrine the patron saint looks calmly down upon the scene of desolation. The falling terraces showed how fine the gardens must have been when the convent was inhabited.

Not far from this spot there was a very large extent of ground, artificially raised, on which stood the palace of the viceroys, the most richly paid governors in the world. Accounts are still extant which tell of their diamonds, their golden vessels, their jewelled robes, and of the state and luxury in which they lived, and alas! of the cruel and wicked deeds by which their lives were stained. We tried to penetrate the jungle which now covers the scene of all this splendour, but in vain, being deterred by the sharp thorns and the dread of reptiles. The sole remnant of the general wreck was part of a beautifully sculptured gateway, which still remained. Whilst I was tracing out the geometrical designs, a fever-stricken boy, with cunning eyes, armed with a stone, sprang from the bushes, and, making a sign, began to hammer away at a morsel of twisted cornice. To frighten him I made horrible faces and

determined motions, and the creature fled to his lair, in order to await some more reasonable sight-seer.

The church of St. Cajetan, which was attached to the palace, and was modelled after St. Peter's, is about the freshest building in Old Goa. The order of the Cajetans, instituted by Paul IV., established themselves in this settlement in the middle of the seventeenth century, and, strangely enough, were joined by many natives, those of Brahmanical descent alone being admitted. These Brahmans were the most renowned confessors in the colony. The wide curving streets, once thronged with people, still thread the jungle, but with the exception of the monastic establishments, not even the relic of a house is to be seen, a crumbling bit of garden wall, or a cluster of trees foreign to the place, being all that now remains to tell of other days.

The blow struck by the Dutch to the Portuguese possessions, their own cruel policy, and the declining influence of the Jesuits, were not the only causes of the ruin of Old Goa, for malaria stalked amidst its tropical vegetation, and at the close of the last century a fearful outburst of cholera decimated the inhabitants, and scattered the population. Everything be-

longing to the inhabitants was then carried away, and the deserted streets were soon overflowed by the green waves of the jungle, which are as ready as those of the sea to efface the works of man.

The last objects upon which we looked before we turned towards our temporary home were a few mounds, capped by sharp black stones, upon which no lichen grew—all that remained of the terrible walls of the Inquisition. As we looked upon them, it made our hearts swell with joy to think that the dreadful power once wielded there was laid as low as those dark masses of lightning-scathed basalt.

CHAPTER XIII.

Society in Goa—Daughterful Houses—Unwise Export Duties—Supply of Animal Food, Fish, and Fruit—Proposals for the Purchase of Goa—Visit to the Governor—Portraits of the Viceroys—An "Honest Man"—The Monkey's Tooth—Sport at the Rám Ghât—Rambles through the Village of Mutis—Dangerous Swarms of Bees—Tigers' Whiskers—The Skeleton in the Wall—Close of my Year in an Indian Fort.

IN the evening, Madame Albuquerque gave me an amusing description of Goanese society. The balls given by the governor appear to be very brilliant, and the Urasian ladies were said to contribute to the general effect, so far as their gaudy dresses and display of fine jewels, especially pearls, can do.

"I assure you," said my friend, "taking us all together, we are as splendid as peacocks, only, like peacocks, we must not look down at our feet." And here Madame cast a satisfied glance upon her own perfect *chaussure*. "The

one luxury we ladies cannot procure are decent boots and shoes. As for our husbands, if they are obliged to have coats made in Goa, they turn out with the air of cooks and butlers." (Goa supplies half Western India with these domestics.)

I asked her if they had many young ladies.

"Oh! yes," she replied with a laugh, "we have one officer who has ten daughters, another who has eight, and a third who rejoices in seven."

These officers, it appears, are very poorly paid, and are sometimes at their wits' end how to provide their families with suitable toilettes. This was the case upon a late occasion when a really splendid ball was given in honour of the Prince of Wales, who spent a short time in Goa, and won all hearts by his frank good-humour. The coffers of the gentleman with the eight blessings being unfortunately empty, he was permitted to draw two months' pay in advance, and the delighted bevy were provided with dresses for the occasion, and had probably not much to eat for the next three months.

The ladies complained of the difficulty they experienced in procuring good animal food, and of the general increase of prices. Mutton they rarely saw, as there is no grazing land in the

territory, and the beef is very indifferent in quality. Fish, they admitted, was good and plentiful.

"The fact is," said Madame M——, "we have nothing cheap, but the wine which enters duty free from the mother country, and the toddy and salt of the territory."

This unfortunate state of things they declared to be the result of an export duty of seventeen per cent., which had lately been laid on various articles. The effect has been to check industry, and the people have almost ceased to rear poultry, cultivate the fine fruits and vegetables for which they had long been famous, or to make lace, except in such small quantities as could be smuggled out of the country. I found that our friends were paying as much for the turkeys and ducks, reared in their own settlement, chiefly in villages near the mountains, as we were when they arrived in Belgaum, after having been smuggled over the ghâts, by a ramification of tracks only known to the contrabandists.

Without considering myself at liberty to relate private conversations upon political affairs, I may mention the conclusion to which I came: that were it not for their sensitive national pride, the Portuguese, for a good round sum,

would gladly part with their Goanese territory, which it is troublesome for them to retain. Many negotiations have taken place upon the subject, which at the present time is still under consideration. The possession of Goa, the commerce of the long stretch of coast, would be a great boon for the British in this part of the Deccan. Its harbour is the finest on the western coast of India, and offers in other respects greater advantages than that of Vingorla.

Before leaving I was anxious to see the portraits of the long line of viceroys, but they were in the palace, and the governor is chary of having his privacy invaded. However, G—— was good-natured enough to put on his gold lace, "and a' that," and present himself before his Excellency, who was politeness itself. He begged that we would visit his palace whenever we chose, and regretted that our visit to Goa was so soon to be concluded. At twelve o'clock we alighted at the palace, where a remarkably stout aide-de-camp, who said never a word, was in readiness to assist me up the handsome staircase, a very gratifying honour, no doubt, but I would gladly have mounted in a nimbler fashion unaided. The great man himself, who had a number of sonorous names, which I cannot re-

member, was diminutive and wizen in appearance, with sharp black eyes, and a hooked nose, and spoke French with a slight hiss, but very fluently. After a little conversation I was delivered over to the care of our friend the secretary. The pictures had evidently undergone much reparation, and it is probable that some had been interpolated for the sake of making up the series. Still the collection was worth seeing. Many a face bore a characteristic expression which stamped it as original, and no doubt the costumes of all were in accordance with their dates. There was the fierce Vasco de Gama, and Albuquerque, and Constantine de Braganza, of whom it may be said, if the story told of him is true, that he was indeed that "noblest work of God," an honest man. He is said to have refused the sum of three hundred thousand cruzados, offered him by the King of Pegu, in exchange for a monkey's tooth which had once been worshipped as a relic of Buddha. It is satisfactory to know that this historical tooth was handed over to the Archbishop of Goa, and ceremoniously burnt in front of the cathedral.

The palace was a delightful residence, and contained a very large and handsome ball-room. In the corridors there were some fine old clamped chests, cabinets, and other rare bits of church

furniture, which had been brought from Old Goa with a view to their better preservation. In the governor's small and simply-furnished private sitting-room, hung the excellent portraits of the Prince and Princess of Wales, lately given to him.

By nine o'clock at night the town, resounding a few hours before with the hum of voices, appeared to be silent and deserted, the inhabitants having closed their doors and shutters, and retired to the back of their premises. It might have been a city of the dead, had it not been for the animals which were stalled in all sorts of dark nooks. An hour or so later the verandahs looked as if strown with corpses, so stiff were the slumbering forms wrapped up in the white garments used at night. This people consider it wrong to wear during the day any garment they have slept in at night. In spite of their occasional nicety, the Hindoos are not really a clean people. The quilted clothes and wraps, which are worn during the monsoon, serve a generation, and drop to pieces without being cleaned. Another prolific source of evil is, that the clothes which have touched the dead are perquisites, and are taken from the bodies of those who have died of infectious diseases, and sold. All domestic refuse is either

conveyed to the Nullah, close at hand, or thrown into the deep cuttings which separate the houses from the road, which are, with here and there a gap, bridged over by long splinters of stone. The people do not really clean themselves even in bathing, merely rubbing down their limbs with a little water, and sprinkling some on their heads, but without removing such clothes as they may be wearing.

Nothing can be more unpleasant than passing through a village in the early morning, where the inhabitants are cleaning their throats and teeth, a religious ceremony, which must be performed according to the rules laid down in the Shastras.

We stepped out upon the broad balcony, commanding a charming prospect over the deep blue sail-specked Rio to the palm groves, villages, and religious edifices, which stretched along the gentle slopes of the main land, and across the mouth of the great estuary to a darker line of hill, crowned by the spires of the abandoned Jesuit college, which was separated from the island and the ghostly ruins of Old Goa by another arm of azure sea.

The sun rose upon the last day we had to spend in Goa, which was a busy one. Accompanied by Madame M——'s ayah, I visited the

pottery market, in order to buy some vessels of curious form for myself, and to get a few—also too fragile—toy articles for the children—lotos, and toy machines for grinding corn, and many boxes and bowls, which latter I thought might be of use in the manufacture of mud pies. G—— then joined me, and we made other purchases of a domestic character—straw hats, and Dutch cheeses, a dress improver, and some preserved fruits; and we gave an order for some of the ivory figures of Xavier, and other saints, cut by the Hindoos, which are the spécialité of Goa. Alas! we could procure no photographs—a calamity to which I was easily reconciled, for the character of the scenery was very unfavourable for photography. When we packed up, I reserved a special corner for a handsome Japanese cup, which kind Madame had given me as a souvenir. We were carried along the sands for the last time, and it was twilight when were turned, a period which is delightfully prolonged in this region.

Later on we strolled out, and spent a moonlight hour in dodging the glittering sea-foam. We were early birds in the morning, as we had to catch the rising tide; and when all our belongings, including the best bonnet and the remaining duck, had been safely stowed away,

we also were whipped up, and deposited in the barge. We stopped off the fish-market to buy pomphlets for our breakfast, which was to be cooked on board. Boats with dripping brown nets, in which silvery fish were entangled, were hurrying to the side of the quay. Blue as was the water in the broad Rio, it was curiously clear and green under the shadow of the boats. Numbers of men, each tied by a long rope to his tree-hollowed canoe, with bags suspended from their necks, were diving in search of shell-fish. They remained such a time under water that it was quite exciting to watch for their re-appearance.

As we glided away from the busy town, with its quaint gabled houses, painted pink and yellow, with their high-pitched, tabular, and little-pointed roofs, the red tiles of which time had mellowed into a rich, harmonious brown, we sighed to think that we might never see the homely, picturesque-looking place again. At the mouth of the estuary, where there was a great deal of net-fishing, we passed some men who were just hauling in their nets. We slackened our speed, in order to see what they had caught, and to bargain for a saumer, or something with such a name—a fish as large and shining as a salmon, which they threw,

flapping and struggling, into the midst of us. We lived upon that fish for the next four-and-twenty hours.

The sound of many bells was borne upon the gentle breeze. Under the tall palms troops of Christian women, in white savis and blue scarfs, their distinctive costume, were wending their quiet way to early service—for it was Sunday. A holy calm seemed spread around; the murmuring waves lapped the sides of the boat. With hymns in our hearts we lay back in silence. They were never-to-be-forgotten moments.

As G—— was anxious to get as much sport as possible at the Rám Ghât, we contrived to reach the village of Mutés before sunrise. Our luggage was heaped up under a banyan-tree, and as the vehicles could not climb the slippery and almost perpendicular road, we had to make a long détour. All the able-bodied people in the village turned out to carry our effects up the ghât. It was an amusing sight. Of one little boy, with a great copper pot on his head, the legs alone were visible as he climbed from stone to stone. Another had charge of the duck. Astonishing was the nimbleness of the young girls as they mounted with their burdens. They had a peculiar arrangement of savi

which left their shapely limbs free, the garment being passed over one shoulder, and then under the other, secured round the waist by a girdle. If they had borne a quiver and a bow, instead of a package, one might have believed that they were going to the chase in right classic style. One lassie carried a square box, which contained six bottles of rare wine. I scarcely dared to look at her; on she strode, surmounting all obstacles with graceful ease, balancing her burden on her head, and steadying it with an arm which might have served a sculptor for a model.

One pleasant feature of Indian travel, such as this, is that, whatever the number of people employed, there is never any difficulty at the end respecting their payment; they are put together in classes, each receives the proper sum, salaams, and goes away satisfied.

On reaching our destination, we found another crowd of natives awaiting us, G——'s shikaris —black, featureless men, rendered more uncommonly ugly by the whiteness of their teeth and the intense red of the inside of their mouths and tongues. I remarked this to G——, who told me that this unnatural scarlet was the effect of the betel-nut, which they were perpetually chewing.

A great calm succeeded the hurried breakfast and the sporting arrangements. My one-armed friend awaited me in the verandah, and another chair was spread with books and writing materials—great preparations for very little purpose. Until the sun was sinking, I did little but gaze at the magnificent and ever-changing landscape. The scene varied with every passing cloud; every hour the soft shadows fell differently, disclosing new beauties as they passed away. Around the house, and down the steep declivity to the purple valley, all was jungly ground. Close by stood a far-branching tree, with a superb corrugated bole. It was populated by squirrels and birds innumerable, and all the day long I never became weary of watching their charming forms and curious habits through G——'s field-glasses. Many fine collections of birds have been made upon this spot. In the middle of the day G—— sent home a pretty creature, a kind of roedeer, with some grand old jungle cock, and a number of spur-fowl.

Late in the afternoon, I set off to explore the picturesque village, sheltered under a grove of far-spreading old trees. The thatch of the high-pitched roofs came sweeping down within a foot of the ground; windows I saw none, and the doors were very small. What a place must

this be when the furious monsoon breaks over it! The Rámling Pagoda, from which it takes its name, was an ancient place of pilgrimage. The building is low and square, with a smooth pyramidal roof, has no windows, and receives but little light through its one doorway, which gives upon a small hall, made of wattle-work, the Duram Sala of the place. It was some time before my eyes became accustomed to the obscurity which prevailed in the temple. A Lingham on a platform occupied its centre, and a broken bull in black stone (the presence of a bull is a sure sign of a Shiva temple) stood looking at it. There was a bit of carving, representing a warrior on horseback, the remnant of a monumental stone, and a Salágráma stone, which had been placed, no doubt, at the head of many a dying man—not much to see. A large tree spread its canopy of leaves near the building, and underneath it was another black bull, with a carved chain encircling its neck and body.

The village tank, a rather fine structure, was surrounded by a terrace, from which broad flights of steps led down to the water and to the well, which was reserved for domestic purposes. Close to the tank, raised upon a lofty platform, stood a fine domed Mahomedan tomb,

the fine effect of the handsomely carved door of which was somewhat marred by a mud verandah tacked on to it. Above the door was a date-stone, inscribed with Persian characters. This building is used by travellers, if the Government bungalow happens to be full. Broken ground, dotted with large trees, sloped up to the top of the mountain. I was afraid of venturing to any great distance, but rambled about, collecting orchids, which I hooked down by means of my umbrella, and was also able to reach some delicate white flowers, somewhat resembling the azalea, which grew on a lofty tree. Another blossom which I gathered was like that of a very large myrtle—at least, both were white. These hills are covered with a scented grass, called Ronsa grass, from which perfumed oil is extracted, said to be the spikenard of the Scriptures.

The twilight suddenly deepened. I had missed my way, and wandered about in a somewhat forlorn condition. If missing when G—— returned, I knew that I should be searched for. I was not afraid of large beasts, for they must be very hungry to come so near a village, but I did fear that a stray jackal might make himself unpleasant. I was very thankful to see a man driving a buffalo, and

following him to the village, I was soon at home.

There are some dolmans on the Rám Ghât, which it would have interested me much to see, but I did not hear of their existence until after my return home, and I have never been able to obtain any accurate information regarding them.

The following day, whilst sitting in the verandah, a sudden shade was cast upon me, and I heard a strange low noise, the cause of which I could not divine, but the next moment a cloud of swarming bees swept by within a yard of me. I held my breath, so fearful was I of attracting their attention. These insects, if offended, are very dangerous. Some months ago one of our friends was at a picnic where the company had sat down to rest in the shadow of an old mosque, when two swarms of bees, who lived in one of the minarets, roused to anger by the intrusion of a blind mendicant, who had mistaken his way about the building, made a sudden descent upon them. In a moment the ladies were pushed into the mosque, and the gentlemen, running for their lives, hid themselves in all sorts of queer places, and it was two hours before the party were again united in peace. G—— brought home with

him two or three branches, to which small honeycombs were affixed. One of them was very clean, and of a beautiful primrose colour; the others were dark brown, but their contents were very sweet.

G—— was very busy over his jungle cocks. One of them, which he preserved, was a magnificent fellow, with a spotted white breast and golden red feathers, which stood out from the smooth plumage of his neck, as if they had been raised in enamel. In consequence of the quantity of fine flour used to dry up the moisture, the operation of preserving it was not as unpleasant as might have been expected. The feathers taken from the hackles and upper breasts of the other birds, which are invaluable to fly-fishers, were entrusted to me for arrangement, but not without many injunctions as to keeping them all right side up, and perfectly smooth, and seeing that they were dry.

The night before we started for home, one of G——'s shikaris came to tell him that a fine tiger had gorged itself at the foot of the ghât, and that if he would come out next day he would surely get him. Alas! it was too late. G—— had an appointment of moment in Belgaum that very afternoon. It was very provoking, for if G—— had been able to secure

this creature, its whiskers would have been highly prized.

I had already in my possession a few of such stout bristles, as hard as, and much whiter than, the finest ivory. Some people have them twisted with gold, and made into rings. Tiger's whiskers are not often to be met with, for if not sharply looked after, they are stolen by the natives, who steal them to burn before certain idols, who, in return for the gratifying offering, are expected to ensure to the devotee safety and success in the chase. Sometimes, however, they are destroyed out of fear of their subtle power; and it may occasionally happen that they are concealed for a desperate purpose. There is a good deal of secret poisoning in India, and a minute portion of the tiger's whisker, easily administered in food, is a terrible irritant. When received into the stomach, this innocent-looking hair, which is furnished with saw-like edges, works through the coats of the stomach, and produces acute inflammation, which ends in death. The confidential servant of our cantonment magistrate prayed her master, a great sportsman and naturalist, not to leave any of these bristles about. A morsel of the tiger's whisker seen through a powerful microscope presents the most beautiful array of colours.

One more event I have to chronicle. The duck returned in full health to his feathered relations, and in consequence of the pilgrimage he had made to the shrine of St. Francis, an edict went forth that his days should not be unnaturally shortened, and were thenceforth to be passed in peace and plenty.

In the monsoon some forty yards of the old scolloped walls of the fort had fallen with a crash down into the depths below. Government voted a thousand pounds for their restoration, and the work was commenced in the dry season, which happened to be unusually dry this year. Rain had not fallen for months, and parts of the *fosse* were quite dry, for they were able to drain it partially, and much that was usually hidden was exposed. G—— had permission to bring away any sculptured stones which he fancied, with which to ornament his garden. So one morning, very early, we took our sticks and our dogs, and set forth to see what we could find.

We picked our way outside along the broad esplanade, which war and time had broken up. The red walls, reflecting the rosy rays of the rising sun, looked superb, while the tall trees, in their fresh green livery, nodded to us

from over the battlements. The date-palms which fringed the ditch bore bunches of immature fruit, hanging heavily down like strings of golden beads, lending a truly oriental character to the scene. The date-palm is rare in Western India, preferring a hotter and sandier region. We came upon a black stone with a pointed top, which had fallen from its pedestal, and was so high that it would have reached to G——'s shoulder had it been standing. A couple of serpents, twined together, and regarding one another with extended hoods, were cut in bold relief upon it. It was curious, but we passed it by, for we knew that if we had set it up in our domain, the Hindoo servants would constantly have been performing puji before it.

We observed a number of sculptured stones thrown about in a dry part of the ditch; but before examining them we looked carefully about, in order to see if there were any living cobras, which would have been dangerous had we scrambled down carelessly into the ditch. There were broken cornices, with sacred foliage and flowers, in which strange figures of men, and beasts, and demi-gods nestled, the capitals of pillars, and thrones upon which idols had once sat—evidently the remains of some fine temple, which had been used as a quarry when

the walls of the fort were built. They had fallen down during some long past monsoon, and as they were too heavy to be raised without machinery, here they remained.

When we reached the breach, which was about to be repaired, we had to climb over great heaps of sharp-edged stones, and jump the rivulets of water which numbers of men were diverting from the spot where they were at work. They did this skilfully, by means of finely-matted painted baskets, to which ropes were attached. These were dipped down into the pool, raised with a jerk, and their contents tipped over into the proper channel. We groped about, and found several sculptured treasures which gladdened my heart. G—— selected a fine monumental stone, on which five scenes were depicted, some stones on which he thought that his double geraniums would look perfect, and a few large fragments with curious figures sculptured upon them, Buddhas, and a kilted gentleman, whom I believed to represent the founder of some temple, and his sons. All the remains were Jain.

We then proceeded to examine the part under repair. The denuded soft red rock rose seventy feet above our heads. It had not been so exposed for many a day. Three shafts of

stone, which were about twelve feet high, were the great objects of interest. These shafts stood near the bottom of the wall, and *in situ*, although they were crookedly placed with regard to one another, and it was puzzling to conceive what purpose they had served. They were sculptured with the like designs—roses, flowers, scrolls, and points. Two of them stood isolated from the rock; but the third had only been severed from it the previous day, and behind it a skeleton was discovered. The half powdered bones had fallen into a dusty heap, and there they lay for us strangers to ponder over. The workmen declared that no remains of clothes or metal had been found along with them. I sat down upon a stone, whilst G—— and the director of the works—an intelligent Hindoo—proceeded to discuss the matter in the harshest Máhrati, leaving me, all impatience, to glean what I could from their gestures.

As translated by G——, the superintendent's story was to this effect:—Some three hundred years ago the chief who held the fort was desirous of making a handsome arched entrance on this spot, but twice, when all but finished, had the work given way and tumbled down. As some malign influence was considered to be at work, in order to counteract it, a human

being was built alive into the shaft; after which the building was finished, and the walls stood firm. The unfortunate owner of that heap of bones was the victim—man or woman, who can tell?—but most terrible to relate, the most efficacious sacrifice was considered to be a female who was on the point of becoming a mother. Alas! there is scarcely a fort over which Durga reigns whose stones have not been silent witnesses of some such deed. This event happened at the close of "My Year in an Indian Fort!"

THE END.

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